

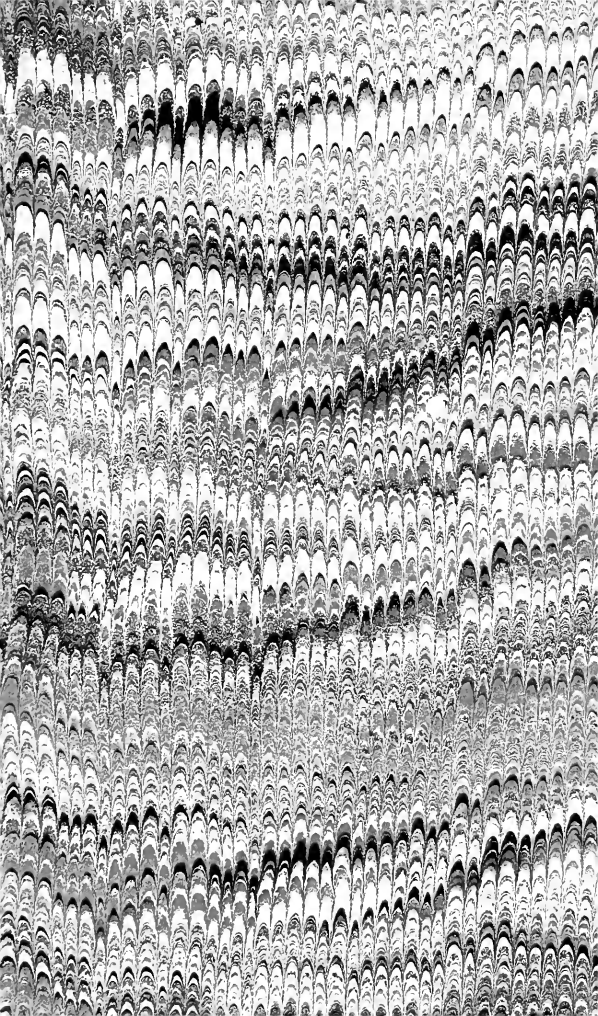


LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA

FROM THE LIBRARY OF
MRS. H. RUSSELL AMORY.

GIFT OF HER CHILDREN
R. W. AND NINA PARTRIDGE.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

HISTORICAL SKETCHES
OF
STATESMEN
WHO FLOURISHED IN
THE TIME OF GEORGE III.
THIRD SERIES.
VOLUME II.

BY
HENRY, LORD BROUGHAM, F.R.S.,
MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, AND OF THE ROYAL
ACADEMY OF NAPLES.

A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR.

L O N D O N :
CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO., LUDGATE STREET.
1845.

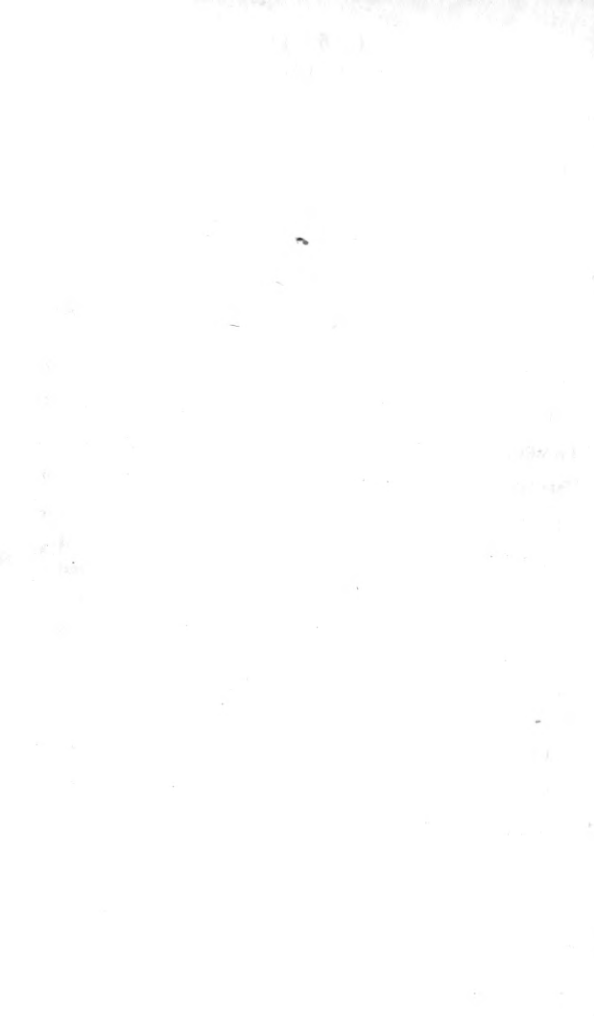
LONDON WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LORD ELLENBOROUGH	5
LORD CHIEF JUSTICE BUSHE	35
THOMAS JEFFERSON	52
AMERICAN DEMOCRACY	67
MARQUESS WELLESLEY	86
LORD HOLLAND	155
JOHN ALLEN	175

APPENDIX.

WALPOLE	183
BOLINGBROKE	213
TRANSLATIONS	232



STATESMEN
OF THE
TIME OF GEORGE III.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH.

It would not be easy to find a greater contrast between two individuals filling places of the same kind, than the great judge whose character we have been contemplating afforded to one of the most eminent that have flourished in later times, Lord Ellenborough. In some respects, indeed, he presented a contrast to all other judges; for he broke through most of the conventional trammels which those high functionaries generally impose upon themselves, or fancy that others expect to behold. Far from abounding in that cautious circumspection, that close adherence to technical proprieties, that restraint of his mind to the mere matter in hand, he despised even much of what goes to form ordinary discretion; and is so much overrated by inferior natures as the essence of wisdom, but so justly valued by calculating ones

as the guarantee of success. Of compromise, whether regarding his opinions or his wishes, he knew not the meaning ; of fear, in any of its various and extensive provinces, he knew not even the name ; or, if he saw its form, yet he denied its title, held its style in mockery, and would not, even for an instant, acknowledge its sway. Far, indeed, from cradling himself within the details of a subject, he was wholly averse to such narrow views of particulars ; and took a large and commanding survey of the whole, which laid open before him all its parts and all their relations. Bred a pleader, he, however, on coming to the bar, early showed that he only retained the needful technical knowledge which this preparatory practice had bestowed on him ; and he at once dashed into the leading branch of the profession. The famous case of Mr. Hastings—the opprobrium of English justice, and, through mismanagement and party violence, the destruction of the greatest remedy afforded by our constitution—soon opened to Mr. Law the highest walks of the bar. He was the defendant's leading counsel ; and his talents, both as a lawyer and a speaker, shone forth conspicuous even upon that great occasion of oratorical display—the only fruits produced by this proceeding, so costly to the country, so much more costly still to the free constitution of England. He soon rose to the unrivalled lead of the Northern Circuit, to

which, by birth, he belonged ; his father having been Bishop of Carlisle, and himself born at the village of Salkeld,* in Cumberland. In Westminster Hall he had also good success, though he never rose there into the first lead ; having indeed to contend with most able rivals, and among them with Erskine, the greatest advocate of all. Lord Kenyon, whose favour for this illustrious ornament of his court I have already had occasion to remark, was felt, or was supposed by Mr. Law, to be partial more than became him to this formidable antagonist ; and a quotation to which this feeling gave rise is often cited, and with justice, as singularly happy. Mr. Erskine had been, somewhat more than was his practice with any adversary, triumphing over him, when Mr. Law, first addressing him and then Lord Kenyon, thundered forth these fine, and expressive, and perfectly applicable lines, with the volume of tone which he possessed beyond most men—

—Non me tua fervida terrent
Dieta ferox ; Di me terrent et Jupiter hostis.

Here he bowed sarcastically to the Chief Justice, while he dwelt and paused upon the name of the heavenly archetype.

* This village is now remarkable as the residence of Mr. Gaskin, a man of the most sterling merit as an astronomer and maker of exquisite telescopes ; father of Dr. Gaskin, late tutor of Jesus College, Cambridge, so well known for his mathematical accomplishments.

As a lawyer, without being very profound, and confining his learning to the ordinary matters of common law, he yet knew quite enough for ordinary occasions; and afterwards, as generally happens with able men, greatly extended his information when raised to the bench. As an advocate he was vigorous, impressive, adventurous; more daring than skilful; often, from his boldness, not a safe leader; always despising the slow progress, the indirect avenues to victory, which the rules of art prescribe;—always preferring to vault over obstacles, follow the shortest line, and cut the knot rather than waste time in untying it. But he could powerfully address the feelings, whether to rouse indignation at cruelty, or contempt at fraud, or scorn at meanness. For his own nature had nothing harsh in it, except his irascible temper, quickly roused, as quickly appeased; his mind was just, abhorring any deviation from equity; his nature was noble, holding in utter contempt everything low or base; his spirit was open, manly, honest, and ever moved with disgust at anything false or tricky; his courage was high, leaving him more scorn than compassion for nerves less firm than his own. Nor was it only the thunder of his fierce declamation—very effectual, though somewhat clumsy, and occasionally coarse—with which he could prevail against an adversary, and master an audience. He had no mean power of ridicule,

as playful as a mind more strong than refined could make it ; while of sarcasm he was an eminent professor, but of the kind which hacks, and tears, and flays its victims, rather than destroys by cutting keenly. His vigorous understanding, holding no fellowship with anything that was petty or paltry, naturally saw the contemptible or inconsistent, and therefore, in this wise, ludicrous aspect of things ; nor did he apply any restraint on this propensity of his nature when he came into stations where it could less freely be indulged. His interrogative exclamation in Lord Melville's case, when the party's ignorance of having taken accommodation out of the public fund was alleged—indeed, was proved—may be remembered as very picturesque, though perhaps more pungent than dignified. “Not know money? Did he see it when it glittered? Did he hear it when it chinked?” On the bench he had the very well known, but not very eloquent Henry Hunt before him, who, in mitigation of an expected sentence, spoke of some who “complained of his dangerous eloquence.”—“They do you great injustice, sir,” said the considerate and merciful Chief Justice, kindly wanting to relieve him from all anxiety on this charge. After he had been listening to two conveyancers for a whole day of a long and most technical argument in silence, and with a wholesome fear of lengthening it by any interruption whatever, one

of them in reply to a remark from another judge said, "If it is the pleasure of your lordships that I should go into that matter"—"We, sir," said the Chief Justice, "have no pleasure in it any way." When a favourite special pleader was making an excursion, somewhat unexpected by his hearers, as unwonted in him, into a pathetic topic—"An't we, sir, rather getting now into the high sentimental latitudes?"

It was observed with some justice, that his periods occasionally, with his manner, reminded men of Johnson. When meeting the defence of an advocate for a libel on the Prince Regent, that it had been provoked by the gross, and fulsome, and silly flattery of some corrupt panegyrist—"What," said he, "an offence against the law of the land provoked by an offence against the laws of taste! How frail is the tenure by which men hold their reputation, if it may be worn down and compromised away between the mischievous flattery of fulsome praise and the open enmity of malignant abuse!" But it was observed with much less correctness that his sarcasms derived adventitious force from his Cumberland dialect. From his manner and voice, both powerful, both eminently characteristic, they assuredly did derive a considerable and a legitimate accession of effect. But his dialect was of little or no avail; indeed, except in the pronouncing of a few words, his solecisms were not

perceivable. It was a great mistake to suppose that such pronunciations as *Marchant*, *Hartford*, were provincial; they are old English, and came from a time when the spelling was as I have now written the words. He was of those, too, who said “*Lunnun*” and “*Brummagem* ;” but this, too, is the good old English dialect, and was always used by Mr. Perceval, who never crossed the Trent except twice a year going the Midland Circuit. Mr. Fox, a lover of the Saxon dialect, in like manner, always so spoke; and preferred *Cales*, and *Sheer*, and *Groyne*, to *Cadiz*, *Shire*, and *Corunna*.

When his powerful mind was brought to bear upon any question that came before him, whether sitting alone at *Nisi Prius*, or with his brethren in Banc, the impression which he made upon it was immediate, sure, and deep. Sometimes it required the modification of the whole court revising what he had done alone; sometimes the interposition of his fellows sitting with him; but its value was always great, and no man doubted the energy or could avoid feeling the weight of his blows.

The Books are perhaps not the only quarters whither we should resort to find the memorials of a Chief Judge’s learning or talents for transacting judicial business. All that relates to sittings and circuits—that is, nearly two-thirds of his judicial

labours, and by far the most important portion of them—leaves no trace whatever in these valuable Repertories of legal learning. Yet the Term Reports bear ample testimony to the vigour of this eminent individual's capacity, during the eighteen years that he filled the first place among the English Common Law judges.

His manner has been already mentioned in one particular. It was much more faulty in another. He was somewhat irascible, and occasionally even violent. But no one could accuse him of the least partiality ; his honest and manly nature ever disdained as much to trample overbearingly on the humble, as to crouch meanly before the powerful. He was sometimes impatient ; and, as his mind was rather strong than nimble, he often betrayed hastiness of conclusion more than he displayed quickness of apprehension. This slowness was shown by his actually writing his speeches for many years after he was a leader ; and, to the end of his professional life, he would occasionally commit to paper portions even of his intended reply to the Jury. It was a consequence of this power of his understanding, and of his uniform preference of the plain, sound, common-sense views which vigorous minds prefer, that refinements or subtleties were almost as little to his liking, as to the taste of his more cold and cautious successor. But he was not so much disturbed with them. They gave him little vexation,

but rather contributed to his mirth, or furnished food for his sarcastic commentary. "It was reserved," said he, respecting a somewhat refined and quite a new gloss of Mr. Scarlett upon a well-known matter—"It was reserved for the ingenuity of the fiftieth of Geo. III. [he was speaking in the year 1810] to hit upon this crotchet."

To give any samples of this eminent person's eloquence when at the bar would not be very easy, because in his time the practice had not been introduced of publishing corrected reports of ordinary trials; and till the speeches of Mr. Curran and Lord Erskine were collected in very recent times, no such works had ever been given to the public, at least in this country. But I have been so fortunate as to obtain the short-hand writer's notes of Mr. Law's celebrated Defence of Hastings; and a careful perusal of it has fully satisfied me that its merits fully answer its reputation, and that his great forensic powers have not been overrated by the general opinion of Westminster Hall. There is a lucid order in the statement of his details, struggling as he did with the vast compass and repulsive materials of his subject, and a plain, manly vigour in the argument, far more valuable to his cause than any rhetorical display. But there is also much of the purest and most effective eloquence. The topics and the illustrations are felicitously chosen; the occasional figures

are chastely but luminously introduced ; the diction is pure and nervous, marked by the love of strong and homely phrase which ever breathed in his discourse ; the finer passages have rarely been surpassed by any effort of forensic power, and must have produced a great effect under all the disadvantages of an exhausted auditory and a worn-out controversy, and would have ranked with the most successful exhibitions of the oratorical art had they been delivered in the early stage of the trial, before all had become, for the reasons so skilfully stated in the exordium, flat and lifeless. The following two passages will serve to justify my opinion. The first is a portion of the beautifully and skilfully elaborated exordium ; the second is a part of the peroration, and may fairly be set in comparison with Mr. Burke's celebrated panegyric on Mr. Fox :—

“To a taste thus pampered, and I had almost said corrupted, with such luscious delicacies, we have nothing left that we can offer but the plain and simple food, I had almost said the dry husk, of fact and argument.

“But, my lords, we have, on another account, reason to anticipate the dissatisfaction and disgust of your lordships. Not only the manner in which this subject will be treated must be more homely than that to which you have been hitherto accustomed, but the subject itself and every attendant

circumstance has lost the attractive grace and keen relish of novelty. This solemn scene, the concentrated splendour of everything that is dignified and illustrious in the various orders of this well-compacted community,—the dazzling display of the envied and valuable distinctions with which the wisdom of our country has at all times adorned high birth, eminent virtue, brilliant valour, profound learning,—everything, in short, which is precious and sacred in the display of the supreme administration of British justice,—has, by the frequency of its exhibition, lost much of that claim to eager attention and warm interest which it once advanced, much of that favour which it lent to the first efforts of those whose great faculties little needed such adventitious aid to arrest the attention of the world.

“My lords, the province which our duty assigns us is, on other accounts, equally irksome and disadvantageous. To detect brilliant fallacies, to unveil specious errors, is at all times a thankless, obnoxious, and uninteresting office. To dispel the clouds of misrepresentation which have been for so many years gathering over the public life and conduct of the gentleman at your bar within that contracted portion of time which the public patience, and, what at our hands is equally deserving of consideration, the tortured and almost expiring patience of our client, will allow us, is

hardly within the compass of the same talents which have imposed this burden on us, but beyond the reach of all reasonable hope with those meaner faculties on which this Herculean labour rests. Struggling, therefore, against so many natural and so many artificial difficulties, enhanced by the inevitable effect at once of anticipation and of fatigue, where can the advocate look for comfort, or from whence derive any reasonable source of hope?"

The following is taken from the peroration:—

"My lords, I last of all present you with that praise which shall embalm his memory when he shall be no more, and whilst he lives shall enable him to look down with indifference and with scorn upon the most malignant efforts of his bitterest enemies. The people of India in this respect well adopted the practice of the ancients in delaying their sacrifices to heroes till after sunset. They waited not only till the beams which had warmed and cherished them were withdrawn, but they waited till the object of their regard had well nigh set in dark clouds of disastrous night: they waited till it was told, to the grief and astonishment of their distant land, that the beneficent author of so much good to them was arraigned by his countrymen as the cause of their oppression, vexation, degradation, and disgrace. Roused by these sad tidings, the rude but grateful

being who had been called by Mr. Hastings from the hills and forests of Rajawaum to abandon the abode of savage life and to taste the comforts of civilized existence,—the pilgrim who had been protected in his annual visits to the hallowed shrine where his forefathers had worshipped,—the princes who had been raised up, established, and protected by his power,—the humble citizen to whom he had communicated the invaluable blessings of a regular administration of impartial and enlightened justice,—each as he was severally blessed, and each according to his several ritual, invoked the sacred object of his faith and fear in solemn attestation of his thankfulness for that beneficent administration which, under the providence of our common Father, had been the appointed means of drawing down so many blessings on their heads.”

It is not possible to quit this subject without once more expressing the sense now generally entertained by all impartial men of the gross and cruel injustice which marked the whole conduct of this celebrated impeachment. A powerful party, powerful in the Commons, the accusers, as well as among the Peers, the judges, made the destruction of an eminent public servant, admitted on all hands to have conferred the greatest benefits on his country, and crowned with unvaried approval by his employers, the object of their utmost efforts, taking it up distinctly as a party question. It

would have been enough to stamp the proceeding with the character of foul injustice had only the accusers been bound together, excited and exasperated by this factious spirit; because the accuser who prefers criminal charges is bound to act with fairness and with candour towards the object of his attack, and to show that he is only actuated by a painful sense of public duty. But how much more foul a stain attaches to this mockery of British justice, when we find the judges themselves leagued on either side by the same factious propensities, so that each man's vote could as certainly be known before the close of the trial, nay before its commencement, as after he had solemnly laid his hand on his heart and pronounced judgment "upon his honour;" that the victim of these party manœuvres was kept in the suspense of a culprit upon his trial for seven years; that he was during that time the object of incessant vituperation, either from the party chiefs in the Commons, or the party managers before the Lords, or the party writers in the press, or the party spouters at public meetings, and more commonly from all at once, assaulting his devoted character; that all this invective was poured forth against him for many years before one word could be heard in his defence, while half a generation passed away under the horror of his name, which such proceedings were calculated to inspire; that his

fortune, his moderate fortune, should have been exhausted with his health, his spirits, his life, or whatever of these a long service under the eastern sun had left unscathed; and that finally, when men had forgotten all but the eloquence of his adversaries, and would not listen to another word on either side of the tedious question, he should in his old age be pronounced wholly guiltless and honourably acquitted, being ruined as if he had been condemned—these are the outrages upon all justice which this scandalous mockery of a trial presents! But it also exhibits another result of blind factious zeal and boundless personal vanity, not unalloyed with fanaticism. Owing to this proceeding it is that the appointed remedy for misgovernment in our constitution—the impeachment of public wrong-doers—has become so discredited, that it exists in little more than in the theory of the government; while, but for Lord Erskine's firm and judicious conduct of Lord Melville's case, it would hardly have been now mentioned even among the speculative possibilities of our political system.

The chief defect of Lord Ellenborough's judicial character, not unconnected with the hastiness of his temper, also bore some relation to the vigour of his understanding, which made him somewhat contemptuous of weaker men, and somewhat overweening in reliance upon himself. He was

not as patient and passive as a judge ought habitually to be. He was apt to overlook suggestions, which, though valuable, might be more feebly urged than suited his palate. He was fond of taking the case prematurely into his own hands. He despatched business with great celerity, and, for the most part, with success. But causes were not sifted before him with that closeness of scrutiny, and parties were not suffered to bring forward all they had to state with that fulness and freedom, which alone can prevent misdecision, and ensure the due administration of justice. There was a common saying in his time, which contrasts the Court of Chancery under Lord Eldon with the King's Bench under Lord Ellenborough—"the two sides of Westminster Hall," as the Equity and Law departments are technically called. The one was said to hear everything and decide nothing, the other to decide everything and hear nothing. But in Banc, where full time has been given for preparation, where the court never can be taken by surprise, where, moreover, the assistance of three puisne judges is ever at hand to remedy the chief's defects and control his impatience, this hasty disposition and warm temperament was comparatively harmless, and seldom produced mischievous effects to the suitor. At *Nisi Prius* it is far otherwise; for there a false step is easily made, and it may not be easily retraced. If the

judge's power have prevented a moderately experienced practitioner from taking an objection in due time, or from urging it with sufficient distinctness, his client may often be told that he is too late, when he seeks to be relieved against the consequences of this mishap. So when a verdict has been obtained against the justice of the case, and the judge, through the impatience of his nature, has not disapproved it, the injury is remediless, because a new trial will in most instances be refused, or if granted, can only be obtained on the payment of all costs. There can be no manner of doubt, I apprehend, that taking into the account the defect now mentioned, Lord Tenterden was upon the whole a better judge than his abler and more vigorous predecessor. But it is also clear that he did not as promptly despatch the business of the sittings before him.

The state, however, of the bar, and the distribution of business in Lord Ellenborough's time, made it much easier for him to give that despatch. Had he survived to later times, it may well be questioned if he could have proceeded with the same celerity which marked his reign. The suitors as well as the bar were no longer the same body, with whose interests and with whose advocacy he had to deal. In his time, the whole City business was in the hands of Gibbs, Garrow, and Park; with occasionally, as in the cases of the

Baltic risks, the intervention of 'Topping;* and it was a main object with them all to facilitate the despatch of business. This they effected by at once giving up all but the arguable points of law, on which they immediately took the judge's opinion; and the maintainable questions of fact, on which they went to the jury. Fifteen or twenty important causes were thus disposed of in a morning, more to the satisfaction of the court and the benefit of the counsel than to the contentment of the parties or their attorneys. It is true that no real loss was, in the vast majority of instances, sustained by any one through this kind of arrangement, while the time of the public was saved. But it is equally true that every now and then a slip was made and a benefit lost; and that nothing can guard against such accidents but the right course of thoroughly sifting each case, as if it were the only one in which

* The mention of this most honourable man, in connexion with those cases, recalls an incident so creditable to himself, and to the renowned profession to which he belonged, that it ought not to be passed over in silence. A general retainer of a thousand guineas was brought to him, to cover the Baltic cases then in progress. His answer was, that this indicated either a doubt of his doing his duty on the ordinary terms known in the profession (one guinea particular, and five guineas general retainer), or an expectation that he should, on being thus retained, do something beyond the line of his duty, and therefore he must decline it. His clerk then accepted of the usual sum of five guineas, and he led on those important cases for the defendants.

the advocate was retained, or which the judge had to try. Nor must it be forgotten, that the right decision of causes is only one, though certainly the most important, office of justice. Another, only second in importance to that, is the giving parties satisfaction,—such satisfaction as is enough for reasonable persons. Now, as every person is impressed with the idea that there is but one cause in the world, and that one his own, however unmindful of this the court and the counsel may be, discontent, heart-burnings, feelings of injustice suffered, desire of redress in other ways, and among these, oftentimes by means of other suits, is sure to be left in the train of Themis, when the pace she moves at is too rapid for ordinary eyes to follow, and breaks too rudely through the surrounding ties and feelings of interest. Hence, the despatch effected is frequently more apparent (or what Lord Bacon calls *affected*) than real; of which a remarkable example used to be afforded by Sir John Leach, whose swift decisions, without hearing, only produced appeals to the Great Seal. But in whatever way these opinions may be disposed of, one thing was certain;—the kind of arrangement which has been described as prevailing among the leaders in Lord Ellenborough's time could only be found practicable as long as the lead should be confined within a very few hands. When it was at all scattered, such a thing was altogether out of

the question; and in Lord Tenterden's time this distribution undeniably took place.

But another change was also consummated, which, under Lord Tenterden's predecessor, had only begun to operate, and it tended materially both to control the speed of the bench, to promote the interest of the suitor, and to improve the administration of justice. The bar no longer owned so entire a supremacy of the bench; the advocate was not any more placed at an immeasurable distance from the judge; there was not now that impassable gulf between them which formerly had yawned before the barrister's eye. I remember being told by a learned serjeant, that at the table of Sergeants'-inn, where the judges meet their brethren of the coif to dine, the etiquette was, in those days, never to say a word after the Chief Justice, nor ever to begin any topic of conversation; he was treated with fully more than the obsequious deference shown at court to the sovereign himself. Assuredly, the footing upon which judges and barristers have stood in recent times is as different as can well be conceived from that on which those high parties stood under Lord Ellenborough's administration of justice; and one consequence of the new regimen is the much greater fulness of discussion, with its attendant evil, no doubt, the much greater prolixity of counsel, and much slower progress of business.

In another particular Lord Ellenborough differed from his successor, and the diversity originated in the greater vigour of his faculties and his more entire confidence in himself. Lord Tenterden, never having been a leader at the bar, could not abide "the trick" of the profession, and no harm would have been done had he stopped here. But he seemed always to suppose that an address to a jury could be framed on the model of a special plea, or the counts in a declaration, only without the prolixity and repetition habitual with pleaders: and to forget that the surest way of bringing out the truth in any case is to let the conflicting feelings and interests of parties come into their natural collision. His impatience was thus very manifest; and had his nerves been in the same proportion firm as his dislike to declamation and illustration was strong, a struggle would have ensued, in which the eloquence of the bar would either have been extinguished, or have silenced and discomfited the Bench. In like manner, during the interlocutory discussions with the counsel, whether on motions in Banc, or on objections taken before him at *Nisi Prius*, he was uneasy, impatient, and indeed irascible, at nothing so much as at cases put by way of trying what the court had flung out. Being wholly void of imagination to supply cases in reply, and even without much quickness to sift the application of those put, he

often lost his temper, and always treated the topic as an offence. But it was chiefly in obstructing cross-examination, which he wholly undervalued, from his utter incapability of performing his part in it, that his pleader-like habits broke out. Had he been submitted to in this matter, cross-examination would have been only known as a matter of legal history. His constant course was to stop the counsel, by reminding him that the witness had already said so, or had already sworn the contrary, and this before the question was answered; to which it was natural, and indeed became usual, for the counsel to make answer, that this was the very reason why the question had been asked; the object being either to try the witness's memory, or to test his honesty.

Very far otherwise was Lord Ellenborough. He had long and ably led while an advocate, although he never attained the first rank in Westminster Hall, and only shone superior on the Great Circuit of the North. He had therefore a fellow-feeling with the leaders before him; and as for any dread of their address to the jury, or any jealousy of the jury's interference with his functions, or any squeamish notion of his own dignity suffering from the speech to the jury going on before him, or any disinclination to witness the utmost exertion of the advocate's eloquence or wit in speaking, or of his subtlety and

vehemence in cross-examination, there was no more risk of that than if he had not been present in the court. So when an objection was taken to evidence, he never attempted to escape from it by denying the materiality of the fact offered to be proved, or of the question attempted to be put. He at once gave his opinion, to which, and justly, he deemed the parties entitled. Beyond interfering to oppose a prolix and needless statement, or a wearisome and reiterative cross-examination, or a wandering from what he deemed the point in issue, he did not interfere; and the same liberty and even licence which he had himself enjoyed when dealing with witnesses, he freely allowed counsel to use in his presence.

While representing this contrast between the two Chief Justices, we must, in fairness to Lord Tenterden, bear in mind the somewhat anomalous position of a judge while presiding at *Nisi Prius*; a position, the annoyance of which so vigorous a personage as Lord Ellenborough had no occasion to heed, strong in his own resources, relying on his intrinsic qualities, seeking no support to his dignity from any adventitious circumstances, dreading no rival authority to lower it. But inferior men could not so easily bear that rivalry. The judge, indeed, presides over the whole proceedings; but the jury holds *divisum imperium*; and he sits there as the nominal chief while the

advocate is sometimes dealing with the witness as if no judge were present, and sometimes addressing the jury, careless whether the judge hears him or not, equally indifferent whether his lordship approves or disapproves what he says. Princes, it is said, cannot allow any one to address another in their awful presence; nay, the code of etiquette has embodied this feeling of sensitive royalty in a rule or maxim. The ruler of the court has as little love of a proceeding which, in the prefatory words, "May it please your lordship," seems to recognise his supremacy; but in the next breath leaves "his lordship" on the bench entirely out of view, as if he were reposing on his bed, or gathered to his fathers. Few judges, accordingly, are so considerate as to be patient of eloquence, whether in declamation or in witty illustration; few regard these flights otherwise than as in derogation from the respect which is their own especial due. To address passions which they are forbidden to feel—to contemplate topics that must be suited to any palate rather than theirs—to issue jokes by which they ought not to be moved, while all others are convulsed—seems incompatible with their station as the presiding power, or a violation of that respect which it ought to inspire. Lord Tenterden, more than most judges, appeared to feel this; and it was a feeling wholly founded in forgetfulness of the very nature of jury trial, as it was unworthy

of his solid sense and great sagacity. In the distribution of criminal justice the case is widely different. The anxiety necessarily attendant upon the judge's highly responsible office here leads him to court all help from the ingenuity of counsel. Before addressing the jury was allowed in cases of felony, the chances of collision were of course more limited ; but even now nothing of the uneasy feeling to which I have been adverting has been found to take place since the recent change of the practice in criminal courts.

In his political opinions, Lord Ellenborough was originally, like the rest of his family, a moderate Whig. But he never mingled in the associations or proceedings of party ; and held an independent course, with, however, considerable disinclination, at all times, to the policy and the person of Mr. Pitt. He joined Mr. Addington's Administration as Attorney-General, and came into Parliament, where he did not distinguish himself. Lord Kenyon's death soon after made way for him on the bench ; and he was, at the same time, raised to the peerage. The quarrel between that administration and Mr. Pitt did not reconcile him to the minister ; and against Lord Melville he entertained a strong personal as well as party prejudice, which broke out once and again during the proceedings on his impeachment. The accession of the Whigs to power in 1806 was accompanied by

their junction with Lord Sidmouth; and as he required to have a friend in the strangely mixed cabinet, the unfortunate choice was made of the first Criminal and Common Law Judge in the land, of whom to make a political partisan;—he whose high office it was to try political offences of every description, and among others the daily libels upon the government of himself and his colleagues. This error has ever been deemed one of the darkest pages of Whig history. Mr. Fox made a dexterous and ingenious defence, quoting a few special precedents against the most sound principles of the constitution; and, with a singular forgetfulness of the real case, defending an inroad on the pure administration of criminal justice by appeals to instances of Civilians and Chancery lawyers sitting in Parliament. But Lord Ellénborough's own son lately took occasion honestly to state that his father had told him, if it were to do over again, he should be no party to such a proceeding. He said this in the course of the discussion which I raised against making the Lord Chief Justice one of the Regency in the event of the next heir being beyond the seas on a demise of the crown. I may add, that, being asked by Mr. Fox my opinion of his argument the day after Mr. Stanhope's motion, the reception which he gave my strong expression of dissent left me the strong impression that he had fully felt the difficulties of his case, if not its weakness.

On the bench, it is not to be denied that Lord Ellenborough occasionally suffered the strength of his political feelings to break forth, and to influence the tone and temper of his observations. That he ever, upon any one occasion, knowingly deviated one hair's breadth from justice in the discharge of his office, is wholly untrue. The case which gave rise to the greatest comment, and even led to a senseless show of impeachment, was Lord Cochrane's; but I have the best reason to know that all who assisted at this trial were in truth convinced of the purity with which the judicial duties were discharged, and the equality with which justice was administered. Lord Ellenborough was not of those judges who, in directing the jury, merely read over their notes and let them guess at the opinions they have formed; leaving them without any help or recommendation to form their own judgments. Upon each case that came before him he had an opinion; and while he left the decision with the jury, he intimated how he thought himself. This manner of performing the office of judge is now generally followed and most commonly approved. It was the course taken by this great judge in trying Lord Cochrane and his alleged associates; but, if any of those who attacked him for it had been present at the trial of the case which stood immediately before it or after it in the paper, he would have found Lord Ellenborough trying

that case in the self-same way—it being an action upon a bill of exchange or for goods sold and delivered.

I must, however, be here distinctly understood to deny the accuracy of the opinion which Lord Ellenborough appears to have formed in this case, and deeply to lament the verdict of guilty which the jury returned, after three hours' consulting and hesitation. If Lord Cochrane was at all aware of his uncle, Mr. Cochrane Johnstone's, proceedings, it was the whole extent of his privity to the fact. Having been one of the counsel engaged in the cause, I can speak with some confidence respecting it, and I take upon me to assert that Lord Cochrane's conviction was mainly owing to the extreme repugnance which he felt to giving up his uncle, or taking those precautions for his own safety which would have operated against that near relation. Even when he, the real criminal, had confessed his guilt by taking to flight, and the other defendants were brought up for judgment, we, the counsel, could not persuade Lord Cochrane to shake himself loose from the contamination by abandoning him.

As regarded the Lord Chief Justice's conduct at the trial, none of us entertained any doubt that he had acted impartially, according to his conscience, and had tried it as he would have tried any other cause in which neither political nor personal feelings could have interfered. Our only complaint

was his Lordship's refusal to adjourn after the prosecutor's case closed, and his requiring us to enter upon our defence at so late an hour, past nine o'clock, that the adjournment took place at midnight, and before we called our witnesses. Of course I speak of the trial at Guildhall only. Lord Ellenborough was equally to blame with his brethren in the Court of King's Bench for that most cruel and unjustifiable sentence, which at once secured Lord Cochrane's re-election for Westminster when the Commons expelled him upon his conviction, and abolished for ever the punishment of the pillory, in all but one excepted case, perjury, in which also it has practically ceased to defile and disgrace our criminal jurisprudence.—“To cage a person of quality, or to set him in the pillory, upon account of any crime whatever (said Adam Smith, half a century before this case occurred), is a brutality of which no European government except that of Russia is capable.”—(*Mor. Sent.*, p. 11, § 3.)

In 1833, the government of which I was a member restored this great warrior to his rank of admiral in our navy. The country, therefore, in the event of hostilities, would now have the inestimable benefit of his services, whom none perhaps ever equalled in heroic courage, and whose fertility of resources, military as well as naval, place him high among the very first of com-

manders. That his honours of knighthood so gloriously won should still be withholden is a stain not upon him, but upon the councils of his country; and after his restoration to the service, it is as inconsistent and incomprehensible as cruel and unjust.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE BUSHE.

ALTHOUGH I had not the advantage of knowing this eminent person in his judicial capacity, yet I had the great pleasure of his acquaintance, and I also upon one remarkable occasion saw him examined as a witness upon matter partly of fact and partly of opinion; it was before the Irish committee of 1839. The testimony of a judge thus given bears a close resemblance to the opinion which he delivers in Court and the directions which he gives to a jury. Acting in both capacities under the obligation of his oath, and in pursuit of nothing but the truth, it becomes him to pronounce, with most scrupulous fairness, the opinions which he states, to relate with the utmost precision the facts which he knows, and to weigh nicely every word which he uses in conveying his statement. No one who heard the very remarkable examination of Chief Justice Bushe could avoid forming the most exalted estimate of his judicial talents. Many of the questions to which he necessarily addressed himself were involved in party

controversy, kindling on one side and the other great heats; yet never was a more calm or a more fair tone than that which he took and throughout preserved. Some of the points were of great nicety; but the discrimination with which he handled them was such as seemed to remove all difficulty, and dispel whatever obscurity clouded the subject. The choice of his words was most felicitous; it always seemed as if the form of expression was selected which was the most peculiarly adapted to convey the meaning, with perfect simplicity and without the least matter of exaggeration or of softening. The manner of speaking each sentence, too, betokened an anxiety to give the very truth, and the slowness oftentimes showed that each word was cautiously weighed. There was shed over the whole the grace of a delivery altogether singular for its combined suavity and dignity. All that one had heard of the wonderful fascination of his manner, both at the bar and upon the bench, became easily credible to those who heard his evidence.

If we followed him into the circle of private society, the gratification was exceedingly great. Nothing, indeed, could be more delightful; for his conversation made no effort, not the least attempt at display, and the few moments that he spoke at a time all persons wished to have been indefinitely prolonged. There was a conciseness and point in

his expressions which none who heard him could forget. The power of narrative which so greatly distinguished him at the bar was marvellously shown in his familiar conversation ; but the shortness, the condensation, formed perhaps the feature that took most hold of the hearer's memory. They who passed one of his evenings with him during that visit to London will not easily forget an instance of this matchless faculty, and, at the hazard of doing it injustice, I must endeavour here to preserve it. He was describing a Gascon who had sent him wine, which was destroyed at the Custom House fire in Dublin, and he contrived to comprise in a few sentences, to all appearance naturally and without effort, his narrative of the proceeding, with two documents, and the point.—“He had sent me wine which was consumed in the Custom House fire, and he wrote to condole with me on the loss to the public, but especially of the wine, which, he said, he found was by law at the purchaser's risk. I answered, and offered as some consolation to him the assurance that by law it was at the risk of the seller.”—Some members of the Northern Circuit then present were reminded of a celebrated story which the late Mr. Baron Wood used to be called upon to relate, in exemplification of the singular conciseness, and, I may add, felicity, of his diction.*

* It would be difficult to name any composition superior

But it is fit that we should turn to the merits of Chief Justice Bushe while in the earlier period of his life he filled a high station at the bar. His education had been classical, and he studied and practised the rhetorical art with great success in the Historical Society of Dublin University, an institution famous for having trained about the same time Lord Plunket to that almost unrivalled excellence which he early attained, and for having at a former period fostered and exercised the genius of Grattan, and Flood, and all the eminent Irish orators. The proficiency of Bushe may be estimated from the impression which Mr. Grattan confessed that the young man had made upon him. Having been present at one of the debates in the scene of his former studies, and heard Bushe speak, his remark was, "that he spoke with the lips of an angel." Accordingly, upon being called to the bar in 1790, he soon rose to extensive practice, and this he owed as much to his nice discretion, to the tact and the quickness which forms a *Nisi Prius* advocate's most important qualification, as to his powers of speaking. Of law he had a sufficient provision without any remarkable store of learning; nor did he ever either at the bar or on the bench excel in the black letter of the profession.

in this respect to the two Tracts of Mr. Baron Wood, on the Tithe Law and its defects. They were printed, but not published.

But his merit as a speaker was of the highest description. His power of narration has not, perhaps, been equalled. If any one would see this in its greatest perfection, he has only to read the inimitable speech on the Trimbleston cause: the narrative of Livy himself does not surpass that great effort. Perfect simplicity, but united with elegance; a lucid arrangement and unbroken connexion of all the facts; the constant introduction of the most picturesque expressions, but never as ornaments; these, the great qualities of narrative, accomplish its great end and purpose; they place the story and the scene before the hearer, or the reader, as if he witnessed the reality. It is unnecessary to add, that the temperate, and chaste, and even subdued tone of the whole is unvaried and unbroken; but such praise belongs to every part of this great speaker's oratory. Whether he declaims or argues, moves the feelings or resorts to ridicule and sarcasm, deals in persuasion or invective, he never is, for an instant, extravagant. We have not the condensed and vigorous demonstration of Plunket; we have not those marvellous figures, sparingly introduced, but whensoever used, of an application to the argument absolutely magical;* but we have an equal display of chas-

* Let no one hastily suppose that this is an exaggerated description of Lord Plunket's extraordinary eloquence. Where shall be found such figures as those which follow—

tened abstinence, of absolute freedom from all the vices of the Irish school, with, perhaps, a more winning grace of diction ; and all who have witnessed it agree in ascribing the greatest power to a manner that none could resist. The utmost that partial criticism could do to find a fault was to praise the suavity of the orator at the expense of his force. John Kemble described him as “the greatest actor off the stage ;” but he forgot that so great an actor must also have stood highest among his Thespian brethren had the scene been shifted.

In 1798 he came into Parliament. The great struggle of the Union was then beginning ; he at

each raising a living image before the mind, yet each embodying not merely a principle, but the very argument in hand—each leaving that very argument literally translated into figure ? The first relates to the Statutes of Limitation, or to prescriptive title :—“ If Time destroys the evidence of title, the laws have wisely and humanely made length of possession a substitute for that which has been destroyed. He comes with his scythe in one hand to mow down the muniments of our rights ; but in his other hand the lawgiver has placed an hour-glass, by which he metes out incessantly those portions of duration which render needless the evidence that he has swept away.”

Explaining why he had now become a Reformer, when he had before opposed the question :—“ Circumstances,” said he, “ are wholly changed ; formerly Reform came to our door like a felon—a robber to be resisted. He now approaches like a creditor ; you admit the justice of his demand, and only dispute the time and the instalments by which he shall be paid.”

once flung himself into the ranks of its adversaries ; and the most splendid speech to which that controversy gave rise, after Mr. Plunket's, was made by Mr. Bushe. On the measure being carried, he had serious thoughts of removing to England, for he considered Dublin as now become a provincial town. The difficulties into which his honourable conduct in undertaking to discharge the debts of his family had placed him, prevented, in all probability, the execution of this plan, and in the course of a few years he first became Solicitor-General under Mr. Plunket and Mr. Saurin successively, and afterwards, in Lord Wellesley's first vice-royalty, he succeeded Lord Downes as Chief Justice of the King's Bench. All parties allow that during the fierce political contests which filled the period of nineteen years during which he was a law-officer of the crown, he performed his duty with perfect honour towards the Government, but with the most undeviating humanity and toleration towards their opponents in church or state. Nor has the breath of calumny ever tarnished the purity of his judicial character during the twenty years that he presided on the bench. He was stern in his administration of the criminal law, but he was as rigidly impartial as he was severe. In one particular he was perfect, and it is of great importance in a judge ; he knew no distinction of persons among those who practised before him, unless it

was to protect and encourage rising merit; for a young advocate was ever sure of his ear, even when the fastidiousness of veteran practitioners might disregard his efforts. This kindly disposition he carried with him from the bar, where he had been always remarkable for the courtesy with which he treated his juniors; indeed, it went further; it was a constant habit of protecting and encouraging them.

His oratorical excellence was plainly of a kind which might lead us to expect a similar success in written composition. Accordingly he stood very high among the writers of his day; so high that we may well lament his talents being bestowed upon subjects of an ephemeral interest. The work by which he is chiefly known as an author is the pamphlet on the Union, published in answer to the Castle manifesto, written by Mr. Under-Secretary Cooke. Mr. Bushe's tract is called '*Cease your funning,*' and it consists of a well-sustained ironical attack upon the Under-Secretary, whom it assumes to be an United Irishman, or other rebel, in disguise. The plan of such an irony is, for a long work, necessarily defective. It must needs degenerate occasionally into tameness; and it runs the risk every now and then of being taken for serious; as I well remember an ironical defence of the Slave Trade once upon a time so much failed of its object that some worthy abolitionists

were preparing an answer to it, when they were informed that the author was an ally in disguise. No such fate was likely to befall '*Cease your funning.*' It is, indeed, admirably executed; as successfully as a work on such a plan can be; and reminds the reader of the best of Dean Swift's political writings, being indeed every way worthy of his pen.

It would be impossible to give any specimens of this far-famed pamphlet; but there is another, the production of his earlier years, which appears to me possessed of the greatest merit; it is an answer to Paine's '*Rights of Man*;' and it would be hard to say whether the sound and judicious reasoning, or the beautiful and chaste composition, most deserve our admiration. Mr. Bushe was only four-and-twenty when this work appeared, and it is no exaggeration to say that it deserves a place on the same level with Mr. Burke's celebrated '*Reflections.*' To support such a panegyric, examples will be required; and I have no fear in appealing to such passages as the following, after premising that they differ in no respect from the rest of the work, which extends to above eighty pages.

"Any man who has studied the merits and enjoyed the blessings of the English constitution, cannot but be alarmed when the legislators of France ('these babes and sucklings in politics')*

* An expression of Paine's applied to others.

are held up in their cradle to the imitation of a country whose government adds the strength of maturity to the venerable aspect of age; a government which I trust will not be exchanged for a certain tumult in the first instance, and a doubtful reform in the second. I love liberty as much as Mr. Paine; but differ from him in my opinion of what it is—I pant not for the range of a desert, unbounded, barren, and savage; but prefer the limited enjoyments of cultivation, whose confines, while they restrain, protect us, and add to the quality more than they deduct from the quantity of my freedom; this I feel to be my birthright as a subject of Great Britain, and cannot but tremble for my happiness, when a projector recommends to level the wise and ancient land-marks, break down the fences, and disfigure the face of every inheritance. I have no wish to return to the desert in search of my natural rights. I consider myself to have exchanged them for the better, and am determined to stand by the bargain.

“These sentiments, my dear Sir, have tempted me to trouble you and the public with this book. The times are critical, and the feeblest exertion cannot be unwelcome, when a factory of sedition* is set up in the metropolis, and an assistant club

* An association had been formed in Dublin for the purpose of circulating Paine's book, at a low price, through the country.

sends an inflammatory pamphlet through the kingdom ; when these state quacks, infecting their country at the heart, circulate, by fomenting applications, the poisons to the extremities, and reduce the price of the pestilence, lest the poverty of any creature should protect him from its contagion. The times are critical when such a book as Mr. Paine's appears, and the consequences would be fatal if its success were proportioned to the zeal of its author, or the assiduity of its propagators. It is a system of false metaphysics and bad politics. Any attempt to carry it into effect must be destructive of peace, and there is nothing practical in it but its mischief. It holds out inducements to disturbance on the promise of improvement, and softens the prospect of immediate disorder, in the cant of the empiric, '*You must be worse before you can be better.*' It excites men to what they ought not to do by informing them of what they can do, and preaches rights to promote wrongs.* It is a collection of unamiable speculations, equally subversive of good government, good thinking, and good feeling. It establishes a kind of republic in the mind ; dethrones the majesty of sentiment ; degrades the dignity of noble and elevated feelings ; and substitutes a democracy of mean and vulgar calcula-

* An instrument was sold in France for less than half a crown, called "*Droits de l'Homme.*" It concealed a cut-and-thrust sword, and looked like a common whip.

tion. In their usurpation, all the grace, and elegance, and order of the human heart is overturned, and the state of man,

‘Like to a little kingdom, suffers
The nature of an insurrection’——”

The following passage is somewhat more ambitious and figurative, though not more terse and epigrammatic; and, though less severe, it cannot be justly charged with violating the canons of correct taste.

“If the institution of honours perfects and stimulates ambition, and that ambition looks beyond the grave, will not this perpetuation of the prize increase the emulation? Is there nothing to enhance our honour in the consideration that it is to be transmitted to the children of your affection, and that you are the ennobler of many? Is ambition fully gratified, or desert half rewarded by a distinction perishable as yourself, to be laid down ere it is well won, and to crumble into dust with your remains? Is the reward of merit to be intrusted to the ungrateful memory of mankind? Shall its reward be late and its enjoyment short? That deviation from strict justice is not very severe, and is certainly very politic, which indulges the manes of the father with the honours of the son, and forbids man, in the contemplation of his mortality, to look upon his inducements as insufficient, and his rewards as incomplete. The wreath of fame would not be

worth the wear if it was not evergreen ; and the laurel is its emblem because it does not wither. In these considerations I discover a probable and a wise origin of hereditary dignities, as far as their institution regards the person upon whom they were first conferred : in regard to him the reward of merit was enlarged ; in regard to others the encouragement to exertion was increased. But the wisdom of hereditary dignities does not rest here. There is a principle in the heart of man which any wise government will encourage, because it is the auxiliary of virtue,—I mean the principle of honour which, in those moments of weakness when conscience slumbers, watches over the deserted charge, and engages friends in the defence of integrity. It is a sanction of conduct which the imagination lends to virtue, is itself the reward, and inflicts shame as the punishment. The audacity of vice may despise fear ; the sense of reason may be steeled ; art may elude temporal, and impiety defy eternal, vengeance ; but honour holds the scourge of shame, and he is hard indeed who trembles not under its lash. Even if the publicity of shame be avoided, its sanction is not destroyed. Every one suffers when ashamed of himself, and the blushes of the heart are agony. The dread of shame is the last good quality which forsakes the breast, and the principle of honour frequently retains it when every other instance of good conduct has abandoned the

heart. 'This sentiment must ever be in proportion to a man's opinions of what is expected from him ; and in proportion as he is taught that much is expected from him, will it swell in his bosom and sharpen his sensibility. I cannot therefore discover a mere '*diminutive childishness*'* in the institution of hereditary dignities, if they cherish this sentiment, and if this sentiment cherishes virtue ; and France has '*breeched herself*'† into manhood to little purpose of good government in putting down the delusion, if delusion it is. An establishment is something more than '*puerile*,'‡ which gives encouragement to virtue, dignity to worth, adds the idea of great to good, and makes that splendid which was useful. Society was made for man ; and, as man is various, and frail, and vain, it does not disdain to promote his happiness by playing on his foibles ; its strength is armed against his fears ; his hopes are fed by its rewards ; and its blandishments are directed to his vanities. Virtue, coldly entertained in any other corner of the heart, will take a strong hold in the pride of man. She has often erected her temple on the coronets of a glorious ancestry, and the world has been indebted to the manes of the dead for the merits of the living."

The reader of these fine passages is at once reminded of Mr. Burke, and the best of his writings on the French Revolution and the frame of society.

* Paine's expression.

† Ib.

‡ Ib.

It is impossible to doubt that Mr. Bushe had deeply studied that great performance, and that he unavoidably, in treating the same subject, fell into a similarity of style, while he felt a common sentiment with that illustrious author. But there is nothing servile in the imitation, if imitation it be; and of the thousands who have endeavoured to tread the same path, no one but he has been successful. Indeed, it may well be affirmed that, successfully to imitate Mr. Burke, asks Mr. Burke's own genius; and woe betide the wight who, without his strength, ventures to put on his armour. Among the various anecdotes* that have been preserved of the Chief Justice, there is no record of Mr. Burke having been made acquainted with the masterly performance of his fellow-labourer. He who eagerly opened his arms to the able and brilliant, but very inferior

* In various periodical publications there have been accounts of Mr. Bushe at all times of his life. Some of these take him up as early as 1822, on his elevation to the bench; others come down to his retirement; and some have appeared since his death. I have, of course, consulted them all, as well as resorted to private sources of information. That upon some of them, at least, no reliance can safely be placed, is clear from the random way in which facts and dates are dealt with. What shall be said of the careful attention to this subject, of writers who make Lord Grenville's government be dismissed in 1803, and Mr. Bushe have been thirteen years at the bar when that dismissal happened; and who represent Mr. Sheridan as taking a part against the Coercion Bill in 1817, when he died in 1816, and had not been in Parliament since 1812?

coadjutor, whom he found in Professor Wylde, must have received with delight such an ally as the author of this admirable book. It clearly contains not merely the germ and rudiments of the extraordinary, and in some sort peculiar, eloquence for which its author was afterwards so remarkable, but, with a few occasional exceptions in point of severity, a few deviations from simplicity, pardonable on such a subject, it exhibits that very diction itself which distinguished him—chaste and pure, addressed continually to the subject in hand, instinct with epigram, sufficiently but soberly sprinkled with flowers, often sharpened with sarcasm, always akin to serious and wise reflection. When we reflect that this was the work of a very young man, the maturity and gravity of the style, as well as of the reasoning, becomes exceedingly striking: and it is interesting to observe the impression which a perusal of it left on the author's mind after an interval of many years. He possibly felt some of that mortification which Sir Joshua Reynolds and other great artists are known to have expressed upon remarking the excellence of their earlier efforts, and being sensible how little their pencil had afterwards improved. Be that as it may, the following note lies before me in the Chief Justice's hand, dated August, 1831, and it may appropriately close these commentaries.

“ I have read over,” says his Lordship, “ a pamphlet which I wrote in 1791, when a very young

man, in my twenty-fifth year ; and although my better, at least older, judgment and taste condemn some instances of hasty and erroneous opinions rashly hazarded, much superficial and inaccurate reasoning, and several puerilities and affectations of style, yet at the end of forty years, I abide by most of the principles which I then maintained, and consider the execution of the work, taken altogether, as better than anything of which I am now capable."

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

WE have had occasion to note the extraordinary capacity and brilliant history of Washington and Franklin, next to whom undoubtedly among the great men that founded the American republic is to be mentioned Jefferson, although he follows them at a considerable distance. But without the extraordinary virtue of the one—because, indeed, he never passed through the same temptation—and without the singular genius of the other, his services to the great cause of human liberty were truly valuable ; his life was steadily devoted to the maintenance of his principles ; and he displayed both firmness and ability in the important scenes in which he performed a conspicuous part. At a time when there is an unaccountable disposition, even among the friends of liberty, to undervalue the institutions of the great Republic, to grudge her extraordinary success, and to take delight in foretelling her dismemberment and her downfall, it becomes a duty to commemorate the virtues of her founders, even if we should not in all particulars adopt their poli-

tical opinions, and if we should witness with pain some glaring imperfections in the frame or in the working of the polity which they established.

He was educated very carefully for the profession of the law, and had also the inestimable advantage of good classical and scientific instruction. He studied the mathematics under Dr. Small, a brother of the mathematician of that name, who acquired great fame among geometricians by his demonstrations of Dr. Matthew Stewart's celebrated Porisms. When Jefferson came to Virginia, his native state, he was soon distinguished among his brethren as a sound and accurate lawyer. His speaking was plain and business-like, aspiring to no higher praise. But during the eight years that he continued in the profession, his success was so great that he must, had he persevered, have risen to the foremost rank as a practitioner. It happened, however, that the disputes between the mother country and the colonies now broke out, and being chosen in his twenty-fifth year to represent his county in the Virginian Assembly, he soon withdrew his attention from legal pursuits, and finally abandoned them altogether, when he led the way to the Revolution by his Resolution which the Assembly adopted to establish a Committee of Correspondence with the legislatures of the other colonies. The Convention, and then the General Congress, soon followed; indeed, they grew naturally out of the Committee, and only waited the next

act of oppression from England to mature them. Yet still there was the most marked reluctance to throw off the yoke of the mother country. Jefferson himself, in a letter to the Attorney-General, Randolph, written so late as the middle of 1775, and after the first blood that stained the unhappy quarrel had been shed, declared that "in the whole empire there was not a man who more cordially loved the union with Great Britain;" but he added his fixed resolution not to bear taxation without representation.* Even after the battle of Bunker's Hill he expressed to his old master, Dr. Small, then settled in Scotland, his anxious hopes of conciliation. The party called moderate, in contradistinction to the Washingtons and Jeffersons, that under Dickenson, was not less prepared for desperate extremities, if the cardinal point of taxation should not be conceded by England. It is certain, and it is the greatest praise which can be bestowed upon any people in such circumstances, that all parties were guided by men who united

* The thoughtless folly of some in the United States and some in France likening the case of the Union with Ireland to the subordination of America, exceeds belief. Who in America would ever have rebelled, nay who would ever have agitated, if the Americans had been represented in our Parliament? Adam Smith, who proposed a general taxation of the empire to pay the public debt (*Wealth of Nations*, b. v. ch. 3), coupled it with the Irish Union and a representation to America and the West Indies.

extraordinary firmness with singular moderation—men, above all, whose singleness of purpose never appears in any instance to have been suspected—men who would have shuddered at the bare thought of levying a rent upon the feelings of the people which their arts had excited.

But if, in contemplating their whole conduct in the different courses which they had to steer, we look in vain for any deviation from the line of principle and integrity, we also find it impossible to discover any material error of judgment committed in the whole management of their perilous and perplexing affairs. From all the unreflecting violence, the sudden changes, the intemperate excesses, the thoughtless desertion of leaders, the alternations of popular admiration and hatred, by which other revolutions have been so constantly distinguished, when the people were the principal agents in bringing them about, it must be confessed with wonder that the conduct of the Americans was wholly exempt. No deliberative assembly of men, small in number and acting free from all popular instigation or control, ever carried on the affairs of a community settled in peace, and whose existence was assured, with greater calmness or more steady judgment than the American Congress showed in guiding a revolutionary movement, involving at each step of its progress their own exist-

ence and that of the community whom they represented and governed.

When it seemed manifest that neither side would yield, and a separation became inevitable, a committee of five, at the head of whom was Jefferson, received the commission to prepare a manifesto of their reasons for at length taking the great step. His colleagues were Franklin, Adams, Sherman, and Livingston; the paper was prepared by him; they made few alterations, but the Congress omitted about a third part of it, in order to avoid topics that might give offence in the mother country. Among these omissions was a paragraph reprobating the African slave-trade, to which they might not unjustly suppose England was partial, inasmuch as she had formerly interposed her authority—shamefully, scandalously, wickedly interposed it—to prevent the Abolition earnestly desired by her colonial subjects. Nevertheless, it is possible that the omission was also made with a view to conciliate the slave-holding states who had not yet resolved to set their faces against this great abomination. With these omissions, and the further alteration of a few lines, the instrument was finally adopted, and it was signed on the Fourth of July.

This is that famous *Declaration of Independence* by which the freemen of the New world approved themselves worthy of their ancestors in the Old—

those ancestors who had spoken, and written, and fought, and perished for conscience and for freedom's sake,—but whose descendants in the Old had not always borne their high lineage in mind. In the history of mankind there is no more important event, on which side soever of the Atlantic its consequences may be regarded; and if tyrants are sometimes said to feel uneasy on the Thirtieth of January, how much more fitted to inspire alarm are the recollections associated with the Fourth of July, in which no remorse can mingle on the people's part, and no consolation is afforded to their oppressors by the tendency of cruelty and injustice to mar the work they stain!

I have noted the unfortunate omission of the paragraph relating to the Slave Trade; and it is only just to Jefferson's memory that it should here be inserted. The frame of the Declaration was to charge all the grievances complained of directly upon the King of England.

“He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people, who never offended him, captivating* and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to more miserable death in their transportation thither. The piratical

* As usual, this will be reckoned an Americanism (as the Greeks used to say of their colonists, a Solæcism). But it has undoubted English authority—Locke among others.

warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his prerogative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce. And, that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting these very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also has obtruded them ; thus paying off former crimes committed against the *liberties* of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another."

It is to the unspeakable honour of Jefferson, that, born and bred in Virginia, himself an owner of negroes like all Virginian landholders, his first motion in the assembly was a proposition to facilitate the manumission of slaves. It was not till 1782 that the full power of emancipation was given by the legislature. But his proposal in 1779 was still further in advance of his age ; it was to declare all children of slaves, born after a certain day, free, and to carry them forth at a certain age as colonists of a new territory—the only practical scheme, perhaps, by which the foul blot of slavery can be removed from the United States.

His plan for the planting of elementary schools to educate the whole people, and of establishing

colleges for the middle classes, and an university for the higher branches of learning, was fated to experience similar delays, though happily not so long protracted ; in 1796 it was partially, and in 1816 wholly, adopted by the Virginian legislature. In another favourite scheme he was more successful. The English law against perpetuities had strangely been modified, or rather abrogated, in Virginia, in the reign of Queen Anne ; so that there was no power of cutting off an entail by fine or recovery, or in any other way than by a private or estate bill. Early in the Revolutionary war Jefferson succeeded in repealing this colonial law, and he soon after also obtained an abrogation of the law of primogeniture. The effect of the change has been great, and has spread universally in Virginia. Men's disposition of their property has followed the legal provision ; no one thinks of making an eldest son his general heir ; a corresponding division of wealth has taken place ; there is no longer a class living in luxurious indulgence, while others are dependent and poor ; you no longer see so many great equipages, but you meet everywhere with carriages sufficient for use and comfort ; and though formerly some families possessed more plate than any one house can now show, the whole plate in the country (says a late historian) is increased forty if not fifty fold. It is affirmed with equal confidence, that though the class of over refined persons has been exceedingly cur-

tailed, if not exterminated, the number of well-educated people has been incalculably increased. Nor does a session pass without disclosing talents which, sixty or seventy years ago, would have been deemed so rare as to carry a name from south to north of the Union.

Jefferson, however, was not more zealous in promoting all measures which might prevent the growth of aristocratic distinctions and maintain the level of republican equality, than he was in furthering whatever might tend to complete religious liberty, with which he conscientiously deemed an established church to be incompatible. Upon this subject we may entertain a very different opinion, and may, with the most entire devotion to the principles of toleration, be able to descry dangers to those principles from the zeal of sects, as well as from the preponderance of a state church. No one who contemplates the intolerance exercised during the times of the Commonwealth in this country can repose any great reliance upon the meekness or the liberality of conflicting sectaries, while it must be admitted by all men, even by candid dissenters, that the Established Church is a mild ruler to those within her pale, a quiet and inoffensive neighbour to those without. But how far a church establishment is compatible with purely republican institutions is a very different question; and it would be most rash to condemn

Jefferson's persevering efforts for eradicating all ecclesiastical privileges, when we reflect that he was acting as a strict, even a stern, republican. The clergy of Virginia had from the earliest settlement of the colony been endowed not only with tithe but with a parochial assessment, although the proportion of dissenters had increased to almost an equality with the numbers of the churchmen. It was not till the year 1799 that Jefferson's efforts were crowned with entire success, and the last marks of preference to one church over the rest were finally effaced. They who agreed with him in opinion upon this important subject maintain confidently that all remains of religious intolerance have been extinguished by those measures, and that the means of spiritual instruction have been greatly extended; but how far the cause of sound and rational religion generally has gained, can only be ascertained by the experience of a longer time.

After having for two years held the office of Governor of Virginia by election, Jefferson was in 1782 chosen to represent that state in Congress. But it was no longer the same body in which he had acted during the tempestuous period of the Revolution, when it consisted only of 50 or 60 persons, all men of business, men of action. He was abundantly sensible of the difference, and looking back on the days when "the Washingtons and the Franklins were wont at once to seize the great

point of a question, leaving the little ones to follow of themselves, and never treat two arguments at a time," he adds, "if the present Congress errs in too much talking, how can it be otherwise in a body to which the people send 150 lawyers, whose trade it is to question everything, yield nothing, and talk by the hour?" From this scene he was not sorry to be released by accepting the mission to Paris, where he remained as minister of the United States from 1784 till 1790. The interest which he took in the great Revolution may well be conceived, intimately connected as it was with the American independence; but his foresight of its progress was not clearer than other men's, for he never doubted that a year after his return to America would see the "certain and happy termination of the struggle for liberty."

He now, at Washington's earnest request, overcame the hearty desire which he had of retiring into private life, and became his Secretary of State. If any one could doubt that great man's sincerely republican feelings, this anxiety for the introduction into his cabinet of the very chief of the democratic party must at once dispel all such fancies. The able and virtuous leader of the Federalists in that cabinet was Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury; Knox, the Secretary at War, joined him; while Randolph, the Attorney-General, sided with Jefferson. But Washington, taking part with neither,

held the balance even between them with the scrupulous justice which marked his lofty nature, and with the firm hand which he of all men most possessed. It is strange, it is melancholy, to see the folly of sanguine men in pertinaciously believing that those things have a real existence which they vehemently wish were true. Because Washington never took part with the French faction, and kept aloof from the more violent movements of the democratic party, and because Hamilton and others of the Federalists despaired of a republican government being practicable, or at least permanent, in a great community, the party in this country most opposed to popular institutions, and who retained a hankering after monarchical government in America, must needs flatter themselves that there remained in the United States a leaning towards the British yoke, and that at all events the illustrious President as well as the Federalist chiefs were friendly to kingly power. The truth is, that even Hamilton, the most open admirer of our institutions, never dreamed of giving them another trial in America, until all attempts to establish a lasting republic should be found to fail. His words were remarkable in recommending that all other modifications of popular government should be tried before recourse was again had to monarchy. "That mind," he said, "must be really depraved which would not prefer the equality of political

rights, the foundation of pure republicanism, if it were to be obtained eventually with order." Accordingly each year that what he regarded as the great, though not very promising experiment, continued without a failure—each year that the American constitution proved sufficient for the government of the rapidly-extending people—diminished those apprehensions upon which alone his opinion rested. But Washington never felt any such fears, and wanted no experience to confirm his deliberate purpose of a republic. Towards England he never felt any sentiments but those of distrust and alienation ; and his well-considered judgment respecting a return to monarchy may be easily gathered from his remarkable expression when endeavouring to prevent Jefferson's resignation in 1793, even after the excesses of the French Revolution had lessened the number of republicans everywhere, "that he did not believe there were ten men in the United States for a monarchy." They who flattered themselves that Washington was disposed to content those ten may be classed with the men whose sanguine temperament no disappointments can cure,—the class among whom, unhappily, Mr. Pitt held an eminent place, as he showed when a friend carried him a letter from Geneva, mentioning the assembling of an army of reserve near Dijon, and received for answer from the minister, that "he must have a very disaffected correspondent." The army,

whose existence at Dijon was thus deemed impossible, because it was unpleasant, in less than a month after decided the fate of Europe at Marengo.

When Washington resigned, Jefferson was proposed for the Presidency, but Adams obtained it, and he was chosen Vice-President. At the expiration of Adams's three years, Jefferson succeeded him; and set an example to all party chiefs when promoted to power. He made it his rule never either to remove an adversary because his own partisans required it, or to retain one because his enemies threatened and assailed him. He pursued his own course, regardless of the taunts from one party or the importunity of the other; and, although exposed to more unmeasured abuse than any man that ever filled his high station, he lived to see full justice done him, and the firm and manly course of his administration generally approved. It is profitable to consider such an example; and they who are unable to follow it respecting measures as well as men, may be well assured that they mistook their vocation when they assumed to direct the councils of their country. Whoever suffers himself to be seduced or deterred from the path of his duty, does not rule, but obey; he usurps the place of others; he pretends to guide, when he slavishly follows; but he puts forth false pretences, and would be understood to act for himself, while he is but a tool in other men's hands; he meanly under-

taking the responsibility for the profit or the patronage, they dictating his conduct while they skulk in the dark. It is a compact equally dishonouring both the parties, and of which the country, whose best interests are sacrificed by it, has the most just right to complain.

Although Jefferson retired from public life at the close of his second presidency, in 1806, his days were prolonged for twenty years beyond that period, and these he passed on his estate in Virginia, superintending agricultural improvements, and watching over the university which he had founded and which he regarded with unceasing parental care. Like the other chief magistrates of the Republic, he retired without any fortune, and his property was at his decease found barely sufficient to pay his debts. It was a singular and affecting coincidence, that when the people were assembled in countless numbers to celebrate the Fiftieth anniversary of the American Independence, the passing-bell should toll of Adams, one of the last surviving patriots who had signed the memorable act of the Fourth of July. On that day he expired; but it was after a few days found, that at the same time another of the patriarchs of the New World had also rested from his labours; the author of that famous instrument had, on the same day, closed his earthly course, in his 84th year.

It is impossible to close the page of history which records the foundation of the Great Republic, without adverting to the singular change that seems of late years to have come over some friends of liberty in this country, inclining them against the popular institutions which that system consecrates, and upon which it reposes. Writers of ability, but scantily endowed with candour, observers of moderate circumspection, men labouring under the prejudices of European society, and viewing the social system of the New World through the medium of habits and associations peculiar to that of the Old, have brought back for our information a number of details, for which they needed hardly to cross the Atlantic, and have given us as discoveries a relation of matters necessarily existing under a very popular government, and in a very new community. As those travellers had pretty generally failed to make many converts among the friends of free institutions either in France or in England, there would have been little harm done to the cause of truth, and no great interruption given to the friendly relations which the highest interests of both countries require should be maintained unbroken between them. But unhappily some persons of a superior class appear, from party or from personal feelings, to have, without due reflection on the mischief they were doing, suffered their minds to be poisoned by the

same prejudices ; and, a signal indiscretion having suffered their private letters, written under the influence of such prepossessions, to see the light, it becomes every one, whose general opinions coincide with those of the individuals in question, to protest against the inference that such sentiments are shared by the Liberal party in England. This becomes the more necessary, in consequence of the tendency which the most reprehensible conduct of some of the States in the Union towards their public creditors has to prepare the way for the reception of such unsound opinions—opinions which, if left to themselves, would probably soon sink into oblivion, how respectable soever the quarters which they may, without due reflection, have been suffered to reach. I allude more particularly to some letters lately published of Lord Sydenham, written confidentially to his late colleagues, while he was acting under them as Governor-General of British North America—letters the publication of which has, to me, who knew their writer, and respected his generally sound principles, been a subject of much regret, which he appears to have written in a moment of some irritation, but which would do serious injury to the good understanding that happily has been restored between the two nations, if they were supposed to speak the sense of those among us who are most friendly to America.

A great deal of vague and general abuse may be passed over, as that the Americans "are a calculating people, and fight not for glory but plunder"—"such a set of braggadocios, that their public men must submit to the claims of their extravagant vanity and self-sufficiency"—that there is among them a "general debasement"—"that those who aim at place are corrupt and corrupters, and the masses who bestow preferment ignorant, prejudiced, dishonest, and utterly immoral." I fear me most if not all of this railing might be retorted upon a certain nation whose wars in China have been warmly eulogised by Lord Sydenham in another letter, though he is greatly scandalised that all the glory of his friends is not likely to prevent their seats "slipping from under them ;"* a nation whose general elections have of late years been found a scene of the most hateful corruption, although we should be guilty of a most gross and unpardonable exaggeration were we on this account to stigmatize the whole people as "utterly immoral" in the

* The *naïveté* of this passage is exceedingly great. "But what is the use of all this glory if your seats slip from under you?" Then, after a great abuse of John Bull, "I am afraid that the possession of power is making me terribly inclined to despotism, for I am thinking of planting my cabbages rather under the shade of Metternich or the Czar," &c., p. 326. To be sure ; and this is exactly the consequence of being Governor-General with dictatorial power.

terms rashly applied to his neighbours by the Canadian Governor.

But the charges which he allows himself to lay, and which his relatives have thought it right to publish, are more specific. "The Government seems to me the worst of tyrannies, that of the mob supported by the most odious and profligate corruption. No man who aims at power dare avow an opinion of his own; he must pander to the lowest prejudices of the people, and in their parties (the two great ones which now divide the Union, the Loco-focos and the Whigs) the only subject of the leading men of either is to instil some wretchedly low sentiment into the people, and then explode it for their own advantage. There is scarcely a statesman of either who would not adopt the most violent or the basest doctrine however, if he thought that he could work it to advantage with the majority—peculation and jobbing are the only objects; delusion, and the basest flattery of the people, the means."—"If," adds this discreet statesman, "they drive us into a war, the *Blacks* in the South will soon settle all that part of the Union; and in the North I feel sure that we can lick them to their hearts' content."—"A Republic could answer in former times, in countries where was *no people*, or few; the bulk of the population Helots and slaves; but where there is a people, and they really have the power government is only

possible by pandering to their worst passions, which makes the country unbearable to a man of any education, and the Central Government itself a byword amongst civilized nations. I hope (he concludes, perhaps consistently enough) that we may live long enough to see this great bubble burst; and I do not believe that we need be very long-lived for that" (316).

I am sorry to be under the necessity of declaring that one is at a loss whether most to marvel at the total want of common reflection, or the extraordinary want of common information, in this passage—the production of a man in high office, addressed to a man still higher, and who presumes, without any deliberation, and with no knowledge of the subject, to pronounce so sweeping a censure upon the whole body of a great nation, all their statesmen, and all their institutions. It is fit the Americans should well understand that these are the errors and this the rashness of the late Governor-General of Canada, and not shared by the Liberal party, or by any but the most ignorant and the most prejudiced in this country.

First of all, Lord Sydenham is no authority on the subject of the United States, merely because he was Governor of Canada, and never in the Union at all. Had he remained in London he would have been as well qualified to judge of those States, as his living near them for two years could

make him ; nay, a great deal better ; for his residence in Canada, without giving him one tittle more of information, had the manifest tendency to fill his mind with Canadian prejudices ; and these views seem to have gained a still greater ascendant over him by the disputes of a border nature, in which he was involved. I should, during the separation of England and Scotland before the seventeenth century, never have looked to the Warden of the West Marches for a candid account of the people on the Scotch border when he lived at Carlisle. But, had the Warden directed his hostile operations from York or from Lincoln, I should have believed him just as ignorant as if he had lived in London, and a very great deal more prejudiced.

Next, let us observe how little the Governor-General had studied constitutions when he assumes the office of deciding on their comparative merits. It would not be easy to crowd more manifest errors into one sentence than are found in the few lines about ancient republics. Many things respecting those systems are obscurely known, and are therefore the subject of controversy ; but no one ever affected to doubt of the matters on which this strange sentence errs, and errs dogmatically. Sparta is of course alluded to by the mention of Helots ; but Sparta was not a republican, it was an aristocratic government. Then Athens, which was a republic, so far from proving that such a govern-

ment "could answer," is precisely the example always resorted to in order to prove what Lord Sydenham states to be the vice of the American Government as contrasted with the Grecian, namely, the statesman "pandering to the passions of the people." Yet, this notwithstanding, can any one say that Athens, the very seat of this worst of vices, was by it "made unbearable to a man of any education?" Does he conceive that any of us, even in Canada, are more refined, more civilized, more educated, than the ornaments of Athenian society, the very men who were fain to court the people? It is another error equally great to make it the peculiar characteristic of the modern republic, and the feature that distinguishes it from the ancient, that the "people really had the power." In Athens, if anywhere, they really had the power; we are only left to speculate on the restraints under which it was exercised, and even to doubt if any such existed in practice. But assuredly the bulk of the power was in their hands more than in any other democracy, ancient or modern.

That in the American Government there exist great imperfections no man can doubt; one among the greatest has lately been removed, because the central power of the Federacy is now enabled better to maintain its relations with foreign states in consequence of the recent improvement of the constitutional law. But there remain blots which

still disfigure the system, and in practice sadly mar its working. Of these the very worst, undoubtedly, is the entire change of public functionaries, from the highest to the lowest, which follows every change of the President, converts all the more considerable members of the community into place-hunters, and makes the whole interval, between one election of chief magistrate and another, a constant scene of canvass. The removal of this and a few other imperfections would make the Government of America as faultless as a very popular system can ever be. That some and even considerable evils would be left, evils inseparable from a Republic, because growing out of the large share assigned to the people in the distribution of power, cannot be doubted. But it is no discovery of Lord Sydenham's that as long as men are men power and pre-eminence will be sought after; and that if the right of bestowing these is vested in the people, the people will be courted by those who seek after them.

We are upon a practical, not a speculative, question; and that question is not as to the impossible attainment of theoretical perfection, but as to the comparative merits of different schemes of polity. Power must rest in some part of the community. Patronage must immediately or ultimately rest with them that have power. Shall they be the people at large? No, says Lord

Sydenham ; for if the people are to choose their ministers, they who would fill ministerial places will debase themselves by pandering to the people's prejudices. But what if we intrust this delicate office to a court or a prince, for the purpose of making the duty be more uprightly discharged, and exalting the character of the candidates for favour? Are we so blinded by the evils of popular canvass as to have all of a sudden forgotten that other time-serving, that old species of fawning, that worser form of flattery, which the friends of freedom and of purity used to charge upon the parasites of princes, the crew of courtiers, the minions who pander to the propensities, not of the people, but the despot? Then shall power and patronage be vested in a patrician body, in a class of men whom "a man of education" might well find not "unbearable?" The class fawned upon would here no doubt be found more refined in its tastes, and must be propitiated with a more dainty flattery. Yet I question if the fawning would be less active, if the suppleness of the candidate for favour would be less pliant, if the senator would be less given to cringe, than they who, instead of crawling in the ante-room of the noble, after a more homely fashion take the hand of the peasant and the mechanic. I greatly doubt if less falsehood will be found in the smooth speeches addressed to the select patrician circle than in the boisterous

harangues delivered to win the plebeian. One ground of my doubt is the recollection which we all have of the scenes of endless intrigue and widespread corruption displayed by the aristocratic courts of modern Italy, to say nothing of ancient Rome in her more patrician days; and another ground of my doubt is precisely this, that men are more prone to practise deception in secret than in public, and therefore more likely to use unworthy arts in the closet, the appointed scene of intrigue, than on the hustings, from whence the grosser species of intrigue, at least, must for ever be banished.*

And here is furnished a very striking proof of the entire carelessness with which this political reasoner made his observations upon America, and formed his opinions respecting her people. He plainly affirms of all statesmen in the United States that "their only objects are speculation and jobbing;" and their means of being able to speculate and job are "the basest flattery of the people." Now surely a very little reflection would have sufficed to satisfy any considerate person that this charge is wholly impossible. The existence of

* We must hold even the balance, and blame bad arts, however applied. That I am as far as possible from excusing the unworthy arts of demagogues, above all, their corrupting the people by their vile practices, may appear under the head of Wilkes.

such violent party divisions, and the publicity with which every department of Government is administered, make speculation impracticable. They might as well be charged with "compassing and imagining the death of the King." It is an offence which in such a country can have no existence. But this manifest error into which the writer has fallen, while it shows the strength of his prejudices against the Americans, proves also the weakness of his means of annoyance, and it is a sufficient answer to much of his general invective.

As to the standing topic of vulgar manners, let it be fairly stated that there are many parts both of France and England to which we should not think of resorting were we in quest of patterns, not of printed goods but polished manners. Even while representing Manchester, Lord Sydenham would hardly have cited the bulk of his constituents as superior in elegance to the people of New York. But an authority fully as high as himself on this delicate matter, M. de Lafayette, would, as I personally know, have severely chid him for underrating even the manners of the Americans; and if, after such an authority, any further defence were required, two facts may be mentioned. Sir R. Liston declared that he had never conversed with a better bred sovereign in any court of Europe than General Washington; and among the women of the highest breeding in our day no one would

hesitate to mention Lady Wellesley.* They who have never been in the United States may surely be pardoned if they feel unable to believe the notion entertained by others who, like themselves and Lord Sydenham, have also never been there, but who would yet assume General Washington and Lady Wellesley to be the only persons of fine manners ever produced in the Union.

It is, however, not avowedly on the score of their under-breeding that the Governor-General rests his dislike of the Americans. On the contrary, he rather seems disposed to pass that head of complaint lightly, though it is plainly enough at the bottom of many feelings upon the subject. His main accusation is the mob tyranny, and the habit of their public men quailing before it. No doubt a certain degree of this evil is inseparable from every popular Government. Who in Ireland dares profess any opinion hostile to the Romish hierarchy throughout three of the provinces, or favourable to it in the fourth? No rational politician dares attend a popular meeting now in that country for fear of Repeal, which not one single member of either House of Parliament will vote for,

* Others might well be added. For example, Lady Ashburton; but her long residence in this country prevents all, excepting a few, from recollecting that she came from America in her younger days as highly accomplished in manners as the world has more lately seen her.

save a few Irishmen under mob influence. Who in 1831 was safe in England if he proclaimed his dislike of the Reform Bill? What public meeting has any moderate liberal politician ventured to hold of late years? Have not even the corn-law repealers been fain to raise the popular cry of cheap bread in assemblies collected by tickets, and from which the multitude were carefully excluded? We may not go so far as the Americans in humouring the popular cry of the hour when we address our constituents, because our Government is less purely popular than theirs; but can any one doubt that the speeches of our political chiefs—aye, and even their measures when in office—take the tincture of the multitude to whom they are addressed, and whose favour they are expected to conciliate? If this be denied, we may require to be informed what Lord Sydenham precisely means when—adverting to the free-trade measures respecting timber, sugar, and, above all, corn, in 1841—he says, “It is an immense point gained to get a new flag under which to fight. The people of England do not care a rush for any of your Irish hobby-horses; and they are not with you upon Church matters, or grievances of that kind. Even your foreign policy has not touched them the least, and I doubt whether twenty victories would give you a borough or a county; but you have now given them an intelligible principle offering practical

benefits to contend for, and though defeated on it, as you doubtless will be, defeat will be attended with reputation, and will make you, as a party in the country, far stronger than you have been of late" (p. 90). Now it is to be observed that the preference here given to the Corn Bill over the Irish Church Reform and the other measures is not rested on the relative merits, but solely on the relative popular tendency, of the different plans—their *capabilities* as "flags to fight under;" and the Corn Law is preferred because it is a better party Shibboleth. No doubt Lord Sydenham would have a right to urge that he had always maintained the free-trade doctrine for its own sake; but why will he not allow American statesmen also to prefer each his several tenets for their own sakes? Suppose he had found a letter from Mr. Stevenson to a South Carolina friend maintaining that some proposition for preventing anti-slavery petitions being received by Congress was a fine "flag to fight under," "offered an intelligible principle to contend for," and, though defeated, would make the Virginian "party stronger than it had of late been," how little would it have availed to urge that Mr. Stevenson had always held the same opinions? How triumphantly would Lord Sydenham have pointed to this letter as a confession that American statesmen frame their conduct upon the plan of pandering to the tastes and pas-

sions of the multitude? And would it have been deemed an answer to his inference if it had appeared that the party proposing this extreme course had never thought of it for ten years which they had passed in office, but merely brought it forward when all other means of obtaining influence had failed, and when their fortunes among the constituent bodies of the country were become desperate?

But these are possibly extreme cases. Are there no other instances, even in our own better regulated system, so much less disfigured by popular excess than the American;—no instances of public men shaping their conduct and their speeches according to the opinions and feelings, or even the tastes and caprices, of the people, either generally or locally? Surely common fairness towards the Americans required some consideration of the tone taken in our own election addresses, of the speeches made on our own hustings and at our public meetings, of the difference between these and the parliamentary speeches of the same individuals, nay, of the well known difference between the conduct of parliament itself during its first and its last session. What minister ever ventured to propose a civil list on the eve of a general election?

The arts to which our attention is directed by these remarks are in the highest degree discreditable to all who use them, and are incalculably hurtful

to the people upon whom they are practised. If they are, to a certain extent, inseparable from a very popular Government, their mischief forms a serious deduction from the merits of that system. To restrain them within the narrowest possible limits is the bounden duty of all statesmen, but most especially is it the duty of those who maintain the superior advantages of a popular constitution. Them, above all others, it behoves not to lower the character of popular men, not to corrupt the people themselves ; for it must never be forgotten that the flattery and the falsehood which taint the atmosphere of a court, the poison which tyrants inhale with their earliest breath, cannot with impunity be inspired by the people.

After all, in estimating the merits of any Government, we must never lose sight of what is the end of all government—the comfort and happiness of the people. It may safely be admitted that if a scheme could be devised for embodying a legislature of wise, virtuous, and enlightened men, with an executive council of capacity, integrity, firmness, removed from popular control, animated with the desire of furthering the public good, and consulting, in the pursuit of it, no will or authority but their own chastened judgment, a much purer and more noble Government would be constituted than any that owes its origin to the public choice, and acts under the people's superintendence. But, unhappily, experience has proved that any legislature,

and any executive body, removed from all control, soon forgets the end of its creation ; and instead of consulting the good of the community at large, confines all its exertions to furthering its own individual interest. So it must ever be until we are blessed with a descent of angels to undertake the management of our concerns. Till then there is but one security for the community—a watchful superintendence and an efficient control over its representatives and rulers. The experiment may be coarse and clumsy ; it may be attended with evils of a very serious kind ; it may give rise to an unfortunate influence being exercised by classes of the people who are neither very refined nor always very honest, nor even very well informed as to their own interests. Nevertheless, as human society is constituted, in the choice of evils this is the least ; it admits of many compensations ; it gives the prospect of much diminution as knowledge and as virtue advance ; whereas any system that excludes the popular voice must needs lead to a thralldom and to abuses which admit of no compensation, and, instead of wearing out in time, only gather strength and acquire increased malignity with every year that revolves.

The worst of all the features in the Union Lord Sydenham has no doubt passed entirely over—the disgraceful prejudices against negro emancipation. But even these may yield to circumstances, and give place to more rational as well as more humane

views of national policy, provided a free government continues to bless America, and no catastrophe happens to destroy the Union. Lord Sydenham indeed is thoughtless enough to view with a kind of exultation the prospect of negro insurrection as a consequence of the United States daring to wage war with England. Misguided, short-sighted man ! and ignorant, oh, profoundly ignorant of the things that belong to the peace and the happiness of either colour in the New World ! A negro revolt in our islands, where the whites are as a handful among their sable brethren, might prove fatal to European life, but the African at least would be secure, as far as security can be derived by wading through rivers of blood. But on the continent, where the numbers of the two colours are evenly balanced, and all the arms are in the white man's hands, who but the bitterest enemy of the unhappy slaves could bear to contemplate their wretchedness in the attempt by violence to shake off their chains !—Then again he feels quite confident that the northern states must be utterly defeated, and easily defeated, as soon as they draw the sword against England. Possibly ; and yet this inference has not been very logically drawn by Lord Sydenham from the history of the former American war. When the people of the colonies numbered less than three millions, they defeated the best troops of England, possessed as she was of all the strongholds of the country, and sweeping the ocean with her fleets, before the infant

Republic had a flag floating upon the seas. That twenty-four millions, with entire possession of the land, and a formidable fleet at sea, should be overwhelmed by the Canadians and Nova Scotians, is certainly a possible event ; but that it is as much a matter of course as the Governor of these petty settlements complacently assures himself, may reasonably be doubted. Nay it seems barely possible that some notion should creep into the minds of the Americans, as how a war might lead to the very opposite result, of Canada joining with the United States, and forming an additional member of that great confederacy.

They, however, who are the best friends of both countries, must be the least willing to indulge on either side in such speculations. The Americans will, it is to be hoped, not be tempted to form such pernicious projects by any notion of a hostile feeling towards them prevailing in this country. They may be well assured, that far from regarding their Government as “a bubble,” and trusting that it soon may burst, the universal sentiment in England is the hope that it may long continue to exhibit the proud spectacle of popular freedom, and even popular power, combined with order at home, and moderation abroad, in successful refutation of all the old opinions that a republic was impossible in a large territory with a numerous people.

MARQUESS WELLESLEY.



IF any one were desired to name the family in modern times which, like the Gracchi at Rome, peculiarly excelled all others in the virtues and in the renown of its members, there could hardly be any hesitation in pitching upon the illustrious house of which Lord Mornington, afterwards Marquess Wellesley, was the head. But I had the happiness of a long and uninterrupted friendship with that great man, and enjoyed more particularly his unreserved confidence during the last ten or twelve years of his life. It is fit, therefore, that I distrust my own feelings towards his memory; and in order to preserve impartiality, the first duty of an historian, but the most difficult in writing contemporary history, I shall confine myself in treating of him to the facts which are beyond all controversy, and which, indeed, are the best heralds of his fame.

The family of the Wellesleys originally came from Somersetshire, and by intermarriage with the Cowleys or Colleys, and by a devise from the Poles,* obtained large property in Ireland, where

* Lord Maryborough, on his brother's decease Lord

they were, in 1756, raised to the Peerage. About sixty years ago they took the name of Wellesley, which, I believe, was their more ancient appellation also in this country, that of Wesley being of recent date. The father of the present generation was a person of talents and virtue, and his taste in music being cultivated in an extraordinary degree, he was the author of some beautiful compositions, which still retain their place in the favour of the musical world. Dying while some of his children were very young, the care of their education was left to their mother,* a daughter of Lord Dungannon, and the family fortune being in considerable embarrassment, her merit in bringing them through some difficulties, training them to such

Mornington, was the person to whom this valuable gift was made by a gentleman distantly related to the family. His lordship was then a young midshipman, and was offered the fortune upon condition that he quitted the navy and came to reside with his kinsman. But this he refused, as the war still continued, and he thought leaving the service before the peace would be dishonourable. He supposed, as did his family, that there was an end of the benefaction; but the old gentleman declared by his will that such conduct only increased his esteem for the young man, and left him the Pole estate.

* She was daughter to the first Viscount Dungannon. Her brother died before his father; and the second and late Viscount Dungannon was her nephew. Her father was son to the great-great-grandfather of the present Marquess of Downshire. Hence the relationship of the Wellesleys to the Downshire, Salisbury, and Talbot families.

excellence and such eminence as few families ever attained, exceeds all ordinary praise. This truly venerable matron was permitted by Divine Providence to reap the highest reward which such rare virtues as adorned her character can, in this stage of our existence, receive ; for her life was extended to an extreme old age ; she saw all the glories of Hindostan, of Spain, and of Waterloo ; and left four sons sitting in the House of Lords, not by inheritance, but “by merit raised to that proud eminence.”*

Richard, the eldest son, who at his father's death had nearly attained majority, was first sent to Harrow, where he took part in a great rebellion that had well-nigh proved fatal to the school. This occasioned his expulsion, and he then went to Eton, where he was distinguished above all the youths of his time. When Dr. Goodall, his contemporary and afterwards Head master, was examined in 1818 before the Education Committee of the House of Commons respecting the alleged passing over of Porson in giving promotion to King's College, he at once declared that the celebrated Grecian was not by any means at the head of the Etonians of his day, and on being asked by me (as chairman)

* It is related of Lady Mornington, that on a crowd pressing round and obstructing her carriage when on a visit to the House late in her life, she said to Lord Cowley, who accompanied her, “So much for the honour of being mother of the Gracchi !”

to name his superior, he at once said Lord Wellesley.* Some of his verses in the *Musæ Etonenses* have great merit, as examples both of pure Latinity and poetical talent. The lines on Bedlam, especially, are of distinguished excellence. At Christ Church, whither he went from Eton, and where he studied under Dr. W. Jackson (afterwards Bishop of Oxford), he continued successfully engaged in classical studies, and his poem on the death of Captain Cook showed how entirely he had kept up his school reputation : it justly gained the University prize. In his riper years he retained the same classical taste which had been created at school and nurtured at College. At no time of his life does it appear that he abandoned these literary pursuits, so well fitted to be the recreation of a mind like his. On the eve of his departure for the East he wrote, at Mr. Pitt's desire, those beautiful verses on French conquest, which were first published in the 'Anti-Jacobin,' and of which the present Lord Carlisle, a most finished scholar and a man of true poetical genius, gave a translation of peculiar felicity. Nor did the same taste and the same power of happy and easy versification quit him in

* Some one of the Committee would have had this struck out of the evidence, as not bearing upon the matter of the inquiry, the Abuse of Charities ; but the general voice was immediately pronounced in favour of retaining it, as a small tribute of our great respect for Lord Wellesley ; and I know that he highly valued this tribute.

his old age. As late as a few weeks before his death he amused himself with Latin verses, was constant in reading the Greek orators and poets, and corresponded with the Bishop of Durham upon a favourite project which he had formed of learning Hebrew, that he might be able to relish the beauties of the Sacred writings, particularly the Psalmody, an object of much admiration with him. His exquisite lines* on the 'Babylonian Willow, transplanted from the Euphrates a hundred years ago,' were suggested by the delight he took in the 137th Psalm, the most affecting and beautiful of the inspired king's whole poetry. This fine piece was the production of his eightieth year.

At Oxford he formed with Lord Grenville a friendship which continued during their lives, and led to his intimacy with Lord Grenville's great kinsman, Mr. Pitt, upon their entering into public life. That amiable man was sure to set its right value upon a heart so gentle, a spirit so high, and accomplishments so brilliant as Lord Wellesley's; but it is perhaps one of the most striking proofs which can be given of the fearless confidence reposed by the young minister in his own resources, that at a time when the phalanx of opposition was marshalled by no less men than Fox, Burke, Windham, and Sheridan, and when he had not a single cabinet colleague ever heard in debate, nor

* *Salix Babylonica.*

indeed any auxiliary at all save Lord Melville, he never should have deemed it worth his while to promote Lord Wellesley, whose powers as a speaker were of a high order, and with whom he lived on the most intimate footing. The trifling place of a puisne Lord of the Treasury, and a member of the India Board, formed all the preferment which he received before his appointment as Governor-General of India, although that important nomination sufficiently shows the high estimate which Mr. Pitt had formed of his capacity.

In the Lords' House of the Irish Parliament Lord Wellesley (then Lord Mornington) first showed those great powers which a more assiduous devotion to the rhetorical art would certainly have ripened into an oratory of the highest order. For he was thoroughly imbued with the eloquence of ancient Greece and Rome, his pure taste greatly preferring, of course, the former. The object of his study, however, had been principally the four great orations (on the Crown and the Embassy); and I wondered to find him in his latter years so completely master of all the passages in these perfect models, and this before the year 1839, when he began again to read over more than once the Homeric poems and the orations of Demosthenes. I spent much time with him in examining and comparing the various parts of those divine works, in estimating their relative excellence, and in discuss-

ing the connexion of the great passages and of the argument with the plan of each oration. But I recollect also being surprised to find that he had so much neglected the lesser orations; and that, dazzled as it were with the one which is no doubt incomparably superior to all others as a whole, he not only for some time would not allow his full share of praise to *Æschines*, whose oration against *Ctesiphon* is truly magnificent, all but the end of the peroration, and whose oration on the Embassy excels that of his illustrious rival—but that he really had never opened his eyes to the extraordinary beauties of the *Philippics*, without fully studying which I conceive no one can have an adequate idea of the perfection of Demosthenean eloquence, there being some passages of fierce and indignant invective more terrible in those speeches than any that are to be found in the *Ctesiphon* itself. Of this opinion was Lord Wellesley himself ultimately; and I believe he derived fully more pleasure of late years than he had ever done before from his readings of those grand productions.

Upon this admirable foundation, and with the pure and chastened taste which he thus had to direct his efforts, he could well erect a fine superstructure. For he had a fervent animation, a great poetic force, a mind full of sensibilities, a nature warm and affectionate; and the clearness of his understanding enabled him both to state facts and

to employ arguments with entire success to a refined audience : in the proceedings of none other did he ever take a part. His powers of composition were great ; and he adopted the true method of acquiring the faculty of debating, as well as of excelling in oratory,—he studied his speeches carefully, and frequently committed his thoughts to writing. But he had no mean talent for declamation. In the Irish Parliament he attached himself to the party of Mr. Grattan, then in the midst of his glorious struggle for the independence of his country. That great man quickly estimated his value ; and remained affectionately attached to him through life, although they were thrown afterwards into opposite parties. On removing to England he became a member of our House of Commons, where he was uniformly connected with Mr. Pitt, by private friendship as well as similarity of opinions ; and when the French Revolution, and the principles propagated by it in this country, threatened the subversion of our mixed government, and the trial of the most perilous of all experiments, a pure democracy in a country unprepared for self-government, the talents of Lord Wellesley shone forth in a powerful resistance to the menacing torrent.

The great speech which he delivered in January, 1794, upon the enormities of the French Revolution and the impossibility of making peace with their authors and directors, made an extraordinary

impression at the time. It was, indeed, the most striking and masterly exposition which had ever been presented of the subject ; and it went so elaborately into the details of the whole case, that the attacks made by his opponents consisted mainly of likening it to a treatise or a book. The value of such a piece is to be estimated by regarding it as a whole, and not by particular passages. It has the highest merit as a luminous and impressive statement, accompanied by sound reasoning on the facts disclosed, and animated appeals to the feelings they were calculated to excite. The texture of the whole is artistly woven ; and the transitions are happy and natural. To give any samples of such qualities would manifestly be impossible. But the peroration may be read with admiration :—

“All the circumstances of your situation are now before you. You are now to make your option ; you are now to decide whether it best becomes the dignity, the wisdom, and the spirit of a great nation, to rely for her existence on the arbitrary will of a restless and implacable enemy, or on her own sword. You are now to decide whether you will intrust to the valour and skill of British fleets and British armies, to the approved faith and united strength of your numerous and powerful allies, the defence of the limited monarchy of these realms, of the constitution of parliament, of all the established ranks and orders of society among us, of the

sacred rights of property, and of the whole frame of our laws, our liberties, and our religion; or whether you will deliver over the guardianship of all these blessings to the justice of Cambon, the plunderer of the Netherlands, who, to sustain the baseless fabric of his depreciated assignats, defrauds whole nations of their rights of property, and mortgages the aggregate wealth of Europe;—to the moderation of Danton, who first promulgated that unknown law of nature which ordains that the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Ocean, and the Rhine should be the only boundaries of the French dominions;—to the religion of Robespierre, whose practice of piety is the murder of his own sovereign, who exhorts all mankind to embrace the same faith, and to assassinate their kings for the honour of God;—to the friendship of Barrère, who avows in the face of all Europe that the fundamental article of the revolutionary government of France is the ruin and annihilation of the British empire;—or, finally, to whatever may be the accidental caprice of any new band of malefactors, who, in the last convulsions of their exhausted country, may be destined to drag the present tyrants to their own scaffolds, to seize their lawless power, to emulate the depravity of their example, and to rival the enormity of their crimes.”

It is, however, not as an orator that this eminent person must be regarded; for, before he had attained

the height which he was destined to reach in Parliament, he was sent out to govern our Indian dominions. His administration of that great empire, unparalleled in history, the wisdom of his councils, his promptitude of execution, his rare combination of the highest qualities of the statesman, whether in peace or war, the "*consulto*" united with the "*mature facto*,"* and the brilliant success which crowned all his operations, furnish not merely matter of interesting reflection, but of most useful instruction to all succeeding rulers. Nor can anything be more fortunate than the access which the publication of his "Dispatches" has given to the whole conduct of his splendid administration. It becomes, therefore, a duty of the historian who would record its annals to dwell somewhat in detail upon these things, for the sake of the valuable lessons which a study of them is fitted to impart. To this I shall now proceed; and it is an additional inducement to the work, that we thus shall have an opportunity of nearly observing the character and conduct of by far the most considerable of the statesmen whom the east has in modern times produced—Tippoo Sultan.

It is necessary that we should first of all examine the position of the British power in India with respect to its neighbours, or, what amounts to

* "*Nam primum opus est consulto; et ubi consulueris, opus est mature facto.*"—SALLUST.

nearly the same thing, the force with which it had to cope, and by which it might expect to be assailed ; in a word, the balance of power in the peninsula when Lord Wellesley assumed the government. We must therefore begin by shortly considering in what state the events of 1791 and 1792 had left it.

The general outline of Indian affairs is sufficiently familiar to most readers. Whether for good or for evil to this country men have doubted, and may still dispute—whether for good or for evil to the natives of India, now that the exaggerations of oratory and the distortions of party ingenuity have been forgotten, no man of ordinary understanding can raise any question—a footing had been at first slowly acquired, afterwards rapidly extended, by Great Britain in the Indian peninsula, and was maintained by a small numerical force of our countrymen, but with the consent, at least the entire submission, of a vast body of the people, and with the concurrence and the help of many native powers, whose hostility among themselves we had turned to our advantage with great skill, and with pretty uniform success. It had long ceased to be a question whether or not this empire could be abandoned. Humanity towards our native subjects and our allies, as well as justice towards our own countrymen, forbade all thoughts of that description, even at times when there seemed a very general impression among our rival statesmen

that the East Indian patronage was productive of such peril to the constitution of the government at home, and the whole subject of Indian affairs was beset with such inextricable difficulties, as justified a wish that we had never set foot on the banks of the Ganges. To continue in the same position, and to abstain from all extension of a dominion already enormous, was therefore the only kind of moderation to which recourse could be had; and it is hardly necessary to observe, that even this was a resolve much easier to make than to keep by. For, suppose ever so fixed a purpose to be entertained, that no consideration should tempt us to increase our dominions, no man could maintain such a resolution inflexibly in all circumstances, and indeed least of all in the very event most likely to happen, namely, of some neighbouring state, after having greatly increased its force, attacking us, or overpowering our allies, or even only menacing us, and endangering our existence, should no measures be adopted of a counteracting tendency. In truth, we had gotten into a position from which, as it was impossible to retire, so was it not by any means within our own power to determine whether we should stand still in it or advance; and it might happen that the only choice was a total abandonment of our dominion, or an extension of its boundaries. No doubt such an argument as this is liable to great abuse; it has often been

employed to justify acts of glaring national wrong. But everything depends upon the circumstances in which it is urged, and the particulars of the case to which it is applied. Nor is it now stated with any reference to Lord Wellesley's proceedings in 1798 and 1799; these rest upon wholly different grounds. The present purpose is to explain the conduct of Lord Cornwallis ten years before; and it can hardly be denied that he was left without a choice as to the course he should take, and that the war and the treaty which closed it were rather to be regarded as necessary measures of self-defence, than acts of aggression and of conquest. That they were so considered, that they were defended upon this ground, there can be no doubt; for although reference was made to the attacks by Tippoo upon our ally the Rajah of Travancore, it is quite clear that this alone did not justify the course which we pursued. The first attack had been repulsed: Tippoo had not repudiated our interference, but, on the contrary, had set up a claim of right, grounded on what we ourselves distinctly admitted to be a gross misconduct of the Rajah; and, before the second attack, the Rajah had, in fact, become the aggressor, by invading the Mysore camp. Besides, if our whole object was to defend our ally, the success which early attended our operations had enabled us to attain that end with ease; and we derived no right

from any such consideration to continue the war, as we did, for three years, refusing all offers of the enemy, and only consenting to make peace under the walls of his capital upon the terms of his giving up one-half of his dominions. But the true defence of our proceedings, and that which was by no means kept back at the time, was the dangerous policy of the enemy—the resources at his command, and which he had shown in the clearest manner a fixed determination to employ, first against our allies, and then against ourselves—the imminent hazard to which our existence in the East was exposed as long as such power remained in the hands of a chief bent upon using it to our destruction. Indeed, the principal ground of complaint against the war was much less its injustice than its impolicy; the view taken of our interest in those parts being that which, twenty years before (in 1770), had been sanctioned by the authority of some of the local governments, namely, the expediency of acting with the Sultan of Mysore against the Mahrattas, and regarding the latter as the more formidable adversary; a view which may fairly be said to have become as obsolete in 1790, and as ill suited to the altered circumstances of the times, as the policy of Queen Elizabeth with respect to the Spanish crown would have been at the same period in the management of our European concerns.

We may remark further upon that war, the strong testimony in its favour derived from the bare fact of Lord Cornwallis having been its promoter. The justly venerated name of that prudent and virtuous statesman affords a kind of security for the integrity, and, above all, for the moderation of any line of conduct which had the sanction of his adoption. His Indian administration, so far from having ever been deemed any exception to his well-established character, was admitted by politicians of all classes, at a time when party ran highest upon the affairs of the East, to have been so exemplary, that his last appointment, in 1805, to be Governor-General was the source of universal contentment in England, as well as India; and his loss, which so soon followed, was by all parties regarded as a great public calamity. When it is considered that such was the deliberate and unanimous opinion of our statesmen regarding the course formerly pursued by this excellent person, after so long a time had been given for reflection, and such ample opportunity afforded of learning lessons from experience; and above all, when this opinion was entertained at the very moment that the controversy raged the most vehemently upon the more recent measures of Lord Wellesley, there seems no escaping the conclusion that an unhesitating judgment was pronounced in favour of the policy pursued in 1789 and the two following

years; and, for the reasons already referred to, this judgment could only be rested upon the necessities of our situation in the East, with relation to the Mysore, its ruler, and our allies.

The peculiar circumstances which made Tippoo so formidable a neighbour are known to most readers. He ruled with absolute power over a highly fertile and populous country, of near two hundred thousand square miles in extent; from whence he raised a revenue of five millions sterling a-year, and an army of 150,000 men. Although the latter were very inferior in effective force to European troops, the revenue was equal to thrice as much in this country; and it was accumulating yearly in a treasure ready for the emergencies of war, while his soldiers were rapidly improving in discipline, and becoming every day more fit to meet ours upon equal terms. To his artillery he had given the greatest attention, and he had so formed his corps of gunners and elephants, that he could move a train of a hundred guns to any point with a rapidity unequalled in those countries by any other power. To these great elements of strength must be added the daring, subtle, and politic nature of the man, one of the most remarkable that have appeared in modern times. His ferocious tyranny to his own subjects; his cruel delight in religious persecution, which increased his power with the other bigots of his own per-

suasion ; his inextinguishable hatred of the English, whom he had from his cradle been taught to regard as the implacable enemies of his family—these, though they undoubtedly form dark features in his character, augmented rather than lessened his influence in the peninsula, and made him an object of terror to all whom admiration of his better qualities—his valour, perseverance, address, and patriotism—might fail to captivate. Although his fierce Mussulman zeal alienated him from all Christian nations, yet did his still fiercer animosity against the English so far conquer or assuage his fanaticism as to make him court whatever power was hostile to our interests ; and accordingly his constant endeavour was to gain the friendship and co-operation of France, from which he expected to derive the means of working our overthrow, and indeed of exterminating the British name in the East. On the eve of the Revolution he had sent a great embassy to Paris, with the view of forming an alliance for offensive purposes ; and one of the ministers of Louis XVI. (Bertrand de Molleville) has declared that a most tempting proposal was made to the servants of that unfortunate prince in 1791, with great secrecy, and which they were disposed to receive favourably ; but that Louis regretted too much the consequences of his former interference in our colonial affairs, and was then too bitterly reaping the fruits of it, to embark again in similar

enterprises, even supposing that the internal state of his dominions had left him the option.

There can, I conceive, be no manner of doubt that the war of 1789 with this powerful and implacable enemy, though it effected a mighty diminution of his strength, yet left him more rancorous than ever in his hatred, and sufficiently strong to be regarded still as by far our most formidable neighbour. The cession of half his territories to the Company and its allies, the Nizam and the Mahrattas, had been extorted from him by main force, when many of his principal fortresses were taken, his capital closely invested, and an assault impending, the issue of which the preceding successes of our troops before the place made no longer doubtful. Yet so bitter was the cup then held to his lips, that even in his extremity he flew back from it, broke off the treaty, after two of his three eldest sons had been given into our hands as hostages, and prepared for a last effort of desperate resistance—when, finding that it was too late—that our position made the fall of Seringapatam inevitable, and that his utter destruction was the certain consequence of further refusal, he agreed to whatever was demanded, and, in the uttermost bitterness of spirit, suddenly signed the instrument. Such a personage, in such a frame of mind, though stripped of half his dominions, was very certain to turn the remainder into means of more persevering

annoyance, and only to desire life that he might, on some future day, slake his thirst of vengeance. The country which he retained was full of strong places, and bordered upon our dominions in the Carnatic by so many passes that Madras could hardly ever be reckoned secure from his attack. His territory was centrally situated, between our settlements upon the two coasts, so as to command the line that joined them. He still possessed his capital, a place of prodigious strength, and which he could again fortify as he had done before. His despotic power placed the whole resources of a rich country at his absolute disposal, and the six years that followed the peace of Seringapatam were actively employed in preparing for that revenge which, ever since the disasters of 1792, had been burning in his breast. This is what might naturally have been expected, and it was certainly found to have taken place. But the course of events had still further favoured his designs. The dissensions among the other native princes, and rebellions in the dominions of some, had greatly reduced their strength, while his kingdom had enjoyed a profound peace; and, unfortunately for the English interest, our chief ally, the Nizam, had been so much reduced in his strength and reputation by a disastrous war with the Peishwah, and by a very disgraceful peace which he had been compelled to make, that, as regarded our relative position, the Mysore might be almost said to have gained whatever had been lost

to the Deccan. The state of affairs in France, too, had materially changed since 1791. There was no longer the same indisposition to engage in schemes of Indian aggression ; and, although our superiority at sea made the arrival of French auxiliaries extremely difficult, it clearly appears that, before the expedition to Egypt, and independently of any hopes which he might build upon its successful issue, or upon the permanent establishment of the French in that country, Tippoo had entered into communication with the government of the Mauritius, for the purpose of furthering his favourite design of obtaining their assistance to revenge himself upon the English settlements. The resort of French officers to his service had long placed at his disposal able engineers, as well as other military men : and his troops never were in so high a state of discipline, nor his army so well appointed in all respects.

But it was not merely in his own dominions that he had important help to expect from his French connexions. Other native princes had adopted the same policy, and our ally, the Nizam, more than any. He had a corps of 1500 men under M. Raymond, a French commander, who had served in the war of 1789, and this had since been increased to above 10,000, the officers of which were almost all French, and partook of the exasperation which unhappily at that time prevailed between the two countries—using every endeavour to undermine our influence

at Hyderabad, and so little to be relied on in case of their services being required by our ally against Tippoo, that he might rather reckon upon them as friends than prepare to meet their hostility. Some alarm had been felt upon this head in the campaign of 1792; and although at that time the corps of Raymond was comparatively insignificant in amount, it had nevertheless been deemed, even then, necessary to make the Nizam take into his pay two other corps, one under an Irish, the other under an American officer, to serve as counterpoises to the French, upon the supposition that in the latter Tippoo had natural allies. In 1798, the Irishman's battalion remained at Hyderabad, but numbered no more than 800 men; the American's had been disbanded, and had passed into the service of the Mahrattas; Raymond's, which had increased so much that it formed the bulk of the Nizam's army, was ordered by him to be still further reinforced, and carried to 14,000. It was recruited, in the proportion of a third of its number, from our territories in the Carnatic, and by desertion from our regiments; no pains were spared by its officers to promote this spirit whenever its detachments were near the Madras frontier; and a constant correspondence was maintained by it with the French troops in Mysore. Its influence on the court of Hyderabad was so great as to alarm that minister of the Nizam who was more than the

rest in the interest of England. Finally, Tippoo looked to an invasion of our northern provinces, and those of our Mahratta allies, by Zemaun Shah, the sovereign of Caubul, with whom he had opened a communication, and who had recently succeeded, with but little opposition, in penetrating as far as Lahore, where he was stopped by some dissensions having broken out in his own dominions. The state of our affairs in Oude rendered that province a source of weakness, and compelled us to maintain an extraordinary force there. The Mahrattas had been extremely weakened by quarrels among themselves; and their chief state, that under the Peishwah, had been so crippled by a succession of internal revolutions, that in the event of aid being required against Mysore, little prospect was held out of any effectual co-operation from this quarter; while there, as in every court of India, the intrigues of Tippoo had been unremittingly employed to undermine our influence, and to stir up direct hostility against us.

- It was in this state of affairs that Lord Wellesley assumed the government of India. He arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, on his way out, in February, 1798. He deemed it expedient to open the India-House dispatches, which he met on their passage to Europe; and he found at the Cape, by a fortunate accident, Major Kirkpatrick, a gentleman of great experience and ability, and

who had been the British resident both at the court of the Nizam and of Scindiah. The information which Lord Wellesley received regarding the state of Indian politics from him, and from the dispatches, appears to have immediately laid the foundation of the opinions which he acted upon throughout the difficult crisis that ensued. Indeed, there is nothing more remarkable in these transactions than the statements which he transmitted from the Cape. He evidently had there made up his mind upon the line of policy which it was fitting to pursue, in order to restore the British influence among the native powers, to emancipate our allies there from French influence, and to place them in circumstances that might enable them to maintain their independence and fulfil their engagements with us. The first and most important of his operations when he arrived in India—the one, indeed, which enabled him to attempt all the rest—was the reduction of the corps of Raymond; and we find in the dispatches from the Cape a very distinct statement of the necessity of this operation, and of his determination to substitute for Raymond's corps an additional British force, and resolutely to prevent its increase until that substitution could be enforced. The general outline of the policy which he afterwards pursued with respect to other powers is also very plainly sketched in these memorable dispatches from the Cape; and, as far

as regarded Tippoo, although at the time no information had reached Lord Wellesley or the Government of any acts of hostility, or even of any preparations for a rupture, the course of conduct fit to be held with respect to him is pointed out distinctly.—“My ideas on this subject,” says his Lordship, “are, that as on the one hand we ought *never to use any high language towards Tippoo, nor ever attempt to deny him the smallest point of his just rights*, so, on the other, where we have distinct proofs of his machinations against us, we ought to let him know that his treachery does not escape our observation, and to make him feel that he is within the reach of our vigilance.—At present it appears to me that he is permitted to excite ill-will against us wherever he pleases, without the least attempt on our part to reprehend either him for the suggestion, or the Court, to whom he applies, for listening to it.”*

Lord Wellesley proceeded from the Cape to Madras, where he remained some weeks, in order to superintend the execution of the measures directed to be pursued with respect to a change in the sovereignty of Tanjore. But it subsequently

* It is a remarkable, and I believe an unexampled circumstance, showing how accurately Lord Wellesley’s opinions and plans were formed, that whole pages of his Minute, 12th August, at Calcutta, explaining his views, after they were perfected by a six months’ residence in the country, are taken from the letters written by him at the Cape in February !

appears that this visit was of material use in giving him an accurate view of the character, talents, and dispositions of the principal persons concerned in the government of that presidency. There are few more striking documents among his dispatches than the letter containing an account of these persons which he sent to Lord Clive (afterwards Lord Powis), the new governor, soon after his arrival; and there can be no doubt that Lord Wellesley's personal observation of the individuals led him at once to detect the quarter from whence an attempt afterwards proceeded to thwart his designs, and enabled him to counteract and to frustrate that attempt. Having incidentally adverted to this topic, it is fit that justice should be rendered to the conduct of the two principal persons at that station—Lord Clive and General Harris. No one can rise from a perusal of the Indian correspondence without forming a very high opinion of the admirable good sense, and steady resolution to sacrifice all private feelings to the interests of the service, which guided the whole conduct both of the governor and commander-in-chief. Both of them appear at once to have felt and obeyed the influence of a superior mind when the plans of Lord Wellesley were unfolded to them. His firmness, indeed, his confidence in his own resources, and his determination to carry through his own measures, were tempered on all occasions by the

greatest urbanity and kindness of demeanour towards those coadjutors. Nevertheless, persons of less good sense, and less devoted to the discharge of their duty, would have been apt to make difficulties upon occasions when serious hazards were to be encountered, and men of a mean disposition, and a contracted understanding, would not have failed to play the part in which such persons commonly excel, prompted by envy, or even a preposterous jealousy, where the utter absence of all equality makes it ridiculous—that of carping, and complaining, and repining, and creating difficulties; whereas those able and useful servants of the state showed as much zeal in executing the Governor-General's plan as if all his measures had been their own.

About the beginning of June, soon after his arrival at Calcutta, Lord Wellesley received intelligence of a proclamation having been issued at the Mauritius by General Malartic, the French governor, and was furnished with a copy of that document. In the course of a fortnight its authenticity was proved beyond all doubt; and its importance was unquestionable. It announced the arrival of ambassadors from Tippoo; his offer to the Executive Directory of an alliance, offensive and defensive, against the English power; his demand of assistance; and his engagement to declare war as soon as it should arrive, for the purpose of

expelling us from India; and it called upon the inhabitants of the colony to form a force, which should be transported to Mysore, and taken into the Sultan's service. It was ascertained that the ambassadors had given the most positive assurances in their master's name of his determination to act as the proclamation stated—had obtained the aid of a certain inconsiderable number of French officers and men—had returned with these in a French ship of war—and had presented them to Tippoo, who immediately took them into his service, having also received the ambassadors on their arrival with marks of distinction. His army was known to be on the footing of a war-establishment; that is to say, it was constantly in the field, excepting in the monsoon season, and amounted to between 70,000 and 80,000 men, beside a numerous and well-appointed artillery; and the discipline of the infantry, in particular, had been of late very carefully improved. His treachery, exceeding even the measure of perfidy proverbially common to Eastern courts, had been displayed in the letters sent to the Government at Calcutta, both before Lord Wellesley's arrival, and also to himself, some of them on the very day when proceedings were taken in the negotiations with France. His intrigues with the native courts, and with Zemann Shah, had likewise been discovered; and they all pointed to the same object—the attack of our

settlements the moment he was ready and saw any prospect of success.

In these circumstances Lord Wellesley's determination was immediately taken, to attack him without delay, unless he gave such ample security as should preclude all risk from his aggression when his plans should be matured, and he should receive the further assistance which he expected—security which there was little, if any, reason to suppose he would agree to, after the agonies he had experienced from his losses in the last war. The plan which his Lordship had formed, in the event of hostilities, was to seize the Sultan's portion of the Malabar coast, by marching one army from Bombay; to move another force from the Carnatic upon Seringapatam; and thus compel him both to give up that part of his dominions which enabled him to maintain his intercourse with France, and to dismiss all French officers and men from his service; to receive residents from us and from our allies, which he had, for obvious reasons, uniformly persisted in refusing; and to defray the expenses of the war. But upon examining the condition of the Company's resources, both military and financial, it was found quite impossible to undertake these operations so as to finish the war in one campaign. The Bombay establishment might, though with difficulty, have been able to bear its share of them; but that of Madras, on which the greater movement

depended, was so crippled as to make it impossible for a sufficient force to march upon Seringapatam. Of ultimate success Lord Wellesley entertained no doubt; but he wisely judged that it would be unjustifiable in every view to undertake a war which could not, to a reasonable certainty, be finished within the season.

And now let me claim the reader's best attention, while I endeavour to lay before him a sketch of that admirable combination of means by which the whole plan was not only successfully executed the next year, but by which its success appears to have been rendered as nearly a matter of absolute certainty as anything in politics and in war can be. It will be seen that the designs of Tippoo were met and counteracted, and even the possibilities of his defeating our schemes were prevented by the adoption of a systematic course of policy in almost every quarter of India, in the native courts as well as in our own settlements; that he was, as it were, surrounded in all directions, so as to cut off each chance of escape; that he was guarded against in every avenue by which he might assail 'us, so as to be deprived of all means of offence; that wherever he turned to intrigue against us, there he found our agents on the watch, and our influence fortified—wherever common interests or common feelings gave him a prospect of succour, there a watchful and provident care had neutralized those natural

advantages—wherever actual hostility to us had made ready for him some coadjutor, there a timely vigour, there a clear perception of the end, a determined will in choosing the means, and the prompt and unflinching use of them, paralysed his expected ally, if it failed to make him an enemy.

And first of all, in order to estimate the merits of the policy which we are going to survey, it is requisite that a clear idea be formed of the object in view. It was to reduce the Sultan's power, by taking advantage next year of the cause of war already given by him, unless he could be made, in the mean time, to give the satisfaction and security required. But the army on the Madras establishment was incapable of defending that territory, much more of acting against Mysore. The funded debt of the Company had trebled within a few years, and their credit was so low, that eight per cent. paper was at a discount of eighteen and twenty per cent. ; and even twelve per cent. paper at a discount of four. The Nizam and the Peishwah were our two allies, bound to act with us against the Sultan. But the former, as we have seen, was reduced to a state almost of insignificance, and was in the hands of a military force favourable to Tippoo. The latter was still more crippled, and had a victorious rival in possession of the chief part of his territory, with an army which had subdued him. I allude to Scindiah, who had for a

considerable time left his own country situated in the north, between the Jumna and the Nerbudda, and taken post at Poonah, the Peishwah's capital. Then it became part of Lord Wellesley's object, and without which the rest must fail, to restore those two powers to independence, and make the aid of one, if not both, available to us, while neither should be suffered to act against us. Again, Scindiah himself was accessible to Tippoo's arts, and over him some check must be provided. It was indeed found that both he and the Peishwah were secretly hostile to us; and Scindiah, in particular, was in negotiation with the deposed Nabob of Oude, to overthrow our influence in the north, by restoring that prince, and dethroning the Nabob Vizir, whom we had raised to the throne. Next, there was the threatened invasion of Zemaun Shah, who had prepared to cross the Attock, and was within six weeks' march of Delhi, maintaining by correspondence a friendly intercourse with Tippoo, and little likely to be opposed either by the Seiks or the Mahrattas. It became necessary, therefore, to secure the north against this double danger, both from the Shah and from Scindiah; from the former, if Scindiah remained in the Deccan, abandoning his own dominions to the invader; from the latter, if the Shah either retreated or was repulsed by the Mahratta power. Add to all these difficulties, that which appears to have greatly disconcerted Lord

Wellesley at one moment, the prevailing despondency of leading men at Madras, who had formed so exaggerated an estimate of the danger attending a rupture with Mysore, through a recollection of what the Carnatic had formerly suffered from its proximity to the enemy, and had so lively a feeling of the weakness of their present establishment, that they arrived at a very singular and unfortunate opinion. They maintained that no preparation, even of a prospective nature—no increase, even of the means of defence—should be attempted, because no activity of exertion could enable them to resist the enemy, and any appearance of arming would only draw down upon them an immediate invasion.

Lord Wellesley's first proceeding was to put down with a strong hand the resistance which he met with on the part of those who held this extraordinary doctrine, and whose argument, as he most justly showed, against the prudence of preparing for defence, would become stronger every day as Tippoo's hostile preparations advanced, until at length we should be reduced to the alternative either of implicit submission, or of being destroyed when and how the Sultan pleased. He therefore directed the army to be assembled in the Carnatic without delay; he showed in what consisted the want of efficiency complained of, and applied the remedy, by giving directions to alter the system of supplying draught cattle; he directed the proper

stores for a campaign to be prepared and established on the Mysore frontier; he made the European troops be moved to garrisons in the same quarter, while the native forces should be collected in the field, and ready to act in case of invasion; and he dispatched a supply of specie from Bengal, together with such force of soldiers and marines as could be immediately spared. The resistance offered at Madras was met with temper, but with perfect firmness, by the Governor in Council at Calcutta.—“If,” say they, after referring to the remonstrances of the Council at Madras, “if we thought it proper to enter with you into any discussion of the policy of our late orders, we might refer you to the records of your own government, which furnish more than one example of the fatal consequences of neglecting to keep pace with the forwardness of the enemy’s equipments, and of resting the defence of the Carnatic, in such a crisis as the present, on any other security than a state of early and active preparation for war. But *being resolved to exclude all such discussions from the correspondence of the two governments*, we shall only repeat our confidence in your zealous and speedy execution of those parts of the public service which fall within the direct line of your peculiar duty.”

Lord Wellesley, while this correspondence proceeded, had carried on the operation of most im-

portance in his foreign policy—the restoring and improving our relations with the Nizam and the Peishwah. Nothing could be more signal than the success of this policy as regarded the Nizam, and it proved the hinge upon which all his subsequent measures turned. By negotiations with that prince and his minister, admirably planned, and ably conducted through Major Kirkpatrick, a treaty was concluded for increasing the English subsidiary force, and disbanding the corps formerly commanded by Raymond, and since his death (which had lately happened) by Piron. It was part of this treaty that the French officers and men should be sent to Europe by the Company, and that no Frenchman should again be taken into the Nizam's service. But the consent of the corps itself was to be obtained ; and it is needless to add, that his Lordship's design was to have that without asking for it. Accordingly, while the negotiation was going on, the additional subsidiary force of three thousand men was moved to the Guntoor Circar, a portion of the Deccan ceded to the Company in 1778, and which lies near to Hyderabad, the capital of the Nizam. This force, as soon as the treaty was signed, marched to Hyderabad, and was joined by two thousand of the Nizam's cavalry. A mutiny having broken out in the French corps, advantage was judiciously taken of this to surround and disarm it, which was effected without any

bloodshed. The greatest courtesy and kindness were shown towards the officers, who were immediately embarked with all their property (their arrears of pay having been settled through the intervention of the English resident), and sent first to Calcutta, and afterwards to France, not being treated as prisoners of war. This most important proceeding at once gave a new aspect to our affairs in the peninsula. The Nizam was restored to independence, and became our firm friend; his power was materially increased; for Lord Wellesley's protection of him against the Peishwah and Scindiah, if it did not enable him to resume that station which he had lost since the war of 1795, yet gave him the means of effectually aiding the contemplated operations, and secured him from the possibility of becoming a prey either to Tippoo or his coadjutors. But the effect of the change at Hyderabad was not confined to the Deccan—it was felt all over India, and in our own settlements as well as at the native courts. The confidence in Lord Wellesley which it at once inspired gave a vigour to his government which the mere possession of power never can bestow, especially where political as well as military operations are required; for absolute command may extort implicit obedience, but the exertion of men's faculties, their abilities as well as their courage, can only be fully secured by filling them with zealous devotion to

their superior. The Governor-General had the choice of excellent agents among the able men educated in the Company's service; he pitched upon those who best deserved his confidence; he gave it them freely; and their entire reliance both upon his capacity and upon his support called forth their most strenuous exertions on every occasion.

It must certainly be ascribed chiefly to the change effected at Hyderabad, that he was enabled to prevent any unfavourable proceedings either on the Peishwah's part or on Scindiah's; for their intentions were of the most hostile nature.* The negotiations carried on with them for the purpose of preventing any junction with Tippoo, and maintaining peace between them and the Nizam, were successful. But Scindiah could not be prevailed upon to quit the Deccan and return to his own dominions; nor would the Peishwah so far break with Mysore as to dismiss the Sultan's ambassadors. The influence acquired at Hyderabad, and a force prepared at Bombay to assist either the

* Considerable assistance was derived from a change in the ministry at Poonah, brought about mainly by our influence. But though Nana Furnavese, who was restored to power, was uniformly our friend, his master's disposition underwent no change; and after Lord Wellesley had peremptorily refused his proffered mediation, he was discovered to have taken measures for joining Tippoo, but they were, by our demonstrations, referred to in the text, delayed until the fall of that tyrant approached too close to make any connection with him safe.

Peishwah or Scindiah against the other, should hostilities break out between them, and to counteract both should they join against the Nizam, maintained the existing state of things until the disturbances in Scindiah's own country, and the discontents in the army he commanded, reduced his power to insignificance; and thus the whole military operations against Mysore were carried on ultimately without any interruption from either of those chiefs.

In addition to the holds over Scindiah, which have just been mentioned, the threatened invasion of Zemaun Shah afforded another. In order to protect the northern frontier, it became necessary to send a large force, under Sir J. Craig, into the field, which remained on the frontiers of Oude until the Shah retired from the Seik's country, which he had approached. This force was continued on the same line during the critical state of affairs in the south; and it had, no doubt, a powerful effect upon Scindiah, whose dominions lay exposed to it, had he made any hostile movement in the Deccan. The Rajah of Berar borders upon Scindiah on another line, the south-eastern side. Accordingly, negotiations were at the same time commenced with that prince, for the establishment of a defensive alliance, in case of Scindiah breaking the peace.

We thus perceive the great basis of the whole

operations of Lord Wellesley. The Nizam was emancipated and became an efficient ally.—The Peishwah was secured either as an ally or a neutral by the change effected at Hyderabad, and a demonstration on the side of Bombay.—Scindiah, whose power was much more formidable at first than the Peishwah's, and who was not bound to us by the same obligations of treaty, was not merely kept in check by the same two holds which Lord Wellesley had over the Court of Poonah, but he was further restrained by the movements in Oude, on one of his frontiers, and the arrangements with Berar on another.

That no quarter of the peninsula might be neglected, while every security was taken for the success of his operations against Mysore, Lord Wellesley sent a resident to the Rajah of Travancore, a prince of comparatively small power, but whose position on the south-western frontier of the Sultan made it expedient to obtain his co-operation, and at any rate to watch his proceedings. Material assistance was also to be derived from him in the important department of the conveyance of the two armies, as from Travancore the communication was equally easy with the Malabar and Coromandel coasts.

The arrangements which we have been examining were carried on at first from Calcutta, where the Governor-General remained until his measures had reached a certain point of maturity. But he

wisely deemed it expedient, after this, to be upon the spot, that he might superintend the execution, which now approached, of his plan. Indeed, his departure from Calcutta might have been deferred some time longer, but for the experience which he had had of the resistance to him among certain of the authorities at Madras. This had not been confined to the original order for assembling the army, already adverted to. His proceeding at Hyderabad had been very coldly seconded, and he even thought had been thwarted by the same parties; for when he directed the subsidiary force to be prepared, and sent into the Guntoor Circar—a movement upon which the whole depended—he was met by remonstrances, instead of being supported by zealous endeavours; and he complained of a delay which might have proved fatal in the execution of that order, and which did defer the successful issue of the plan. His Lordship's words, in writing to General Harris upon this subject, evinced at once his strong sense of the treatment he thought he had received, and his resolute determination to trample down all opposition. This dispatch also renders justice to that excellent officer, exempting him from all share in the blame:—"My letter of the 16th July will have informed you how essential a plan to the very existence of the British empire in India would have been defeated, if your honourable firmness had not overcome the suggestions of an

opposition which would have persuaded you to violate the law, under the specious pretence of executing the spirit, by disobeying the letter, of the orders of the Governor-General in Council. This opposition I am resolved to crush ; I possess sufficient powers to do so ; and I will exert those powers to the extreme point of their extent, rather than suffer the smallest particle of my plans for the public service to be frustrated by such unworthy means. With this view, my earnest request to you is that you will communicate to me, without delay, the names of those who have arrogated to themselves the power of governing the empire committed to my charge ; the ignorance and weakness of this self-created government have already appeared to you from the papers which I transmitted to you on the 18th July.”*

At the date of this letter, 19th August, the nego-

* There can be, I conceive, no doubt, and very possibly, upon a calm review of the whole affair, the Governor-General may have had as little, that those persons acted conscientiously in the discharge of what they conceived to be their duty. That they had fallen into a grievous error in their view of the policy fit to be pursued, has been stated more than once in the text : but not only may we acquit them of all fault beyond error in judgment—we may go further—and hold that their duty required them, acting under that error, to express strongly their opinion. They were persons of great respectability, and long and varied experience in Indian affairs. This certainly only increased their influence, and augmented the difficulties of Lord Wellesley’s position.

tiations at Hyderabad had so far succeeded, mainly, no doubt, from the movement in the Guntoor Circar, as to show the short-sightedness of the opposition in question ; but the great event of the disarming did not take place until two months more had elapsed. Lord Clive had now arrived at Madras, and he took the most steady and zealous part in seconding the Governor-General. Nevertheless, the existence of an opinion altogether unfavourable to Lord Wellesley's power among men in authority, and whose great experience was likely to render their opposition embarrassing during the *regni novitas* of Lord Clive, though it should fail to shake his purpose, rendered the personal presence of the Governor-General highly desirable ; and he accordingly removed to Madras at the end of December, and there established the seat of government, leaving the affairs of Bengal to be administered in his absence by the Commander-in-chief Sir A. Clarke and the rest of the Council. But although his arrival at Madras had the effect, by law, of superseding Lord Clive, he most properly took the first opportunity of making a declaration, in the form of a minute in Council, that he should not interfere in any respect in the peculiar affairs of the presidency, or in anything relating to its patronage, civil or military ; but should confine himself to the general interests of the empire, and act with regard to these as if he had continued at Calcutta.

The occupation of Egypt by the French, which had taken place during the preceding summer, and the communication which Lord Wellesley immediately foresaw would be established between Bonaparte and Tippoo (and subsequent events* proved that he had conjectured rightly), induced him to direct Admiral Rainier's fleet to watch the Malabar coast with great care, so that all assistance from the Red Sea should be cut off as far as a naval force could effect this object ; and in case any armament escaped the vigilance of the cruisers, the precautions taken on the coast by land must be relied on, and especially the operation of the Bombay army.

When the Sultan perceived that on all sides preparations were in a forward state against him, and found every native court occupied by Lord Wellesley's agents, he appears to have felt considerable alarm, though he carefully dissembled it for some time. A town and district had been some time before Lord Wellesley's arrival occupied by the Company, called Wynaad ; Tippoo had made representations against this ; it appeared to have originated in mistake ; the subject was examined, and Lord Wellesley at once ordered it to be restored, without any equivalent. Some other unimportant disputes were by both parties agreed to be termi-

* Bonaparte's Letter to Tippoo was found some months afterwards on the taking of Seringapatam, with the other proofs of the Sultan's hostile proceedings.

nated by an amicable inquiry. But Lord Wellesley took the opportunity of this correspondence, as soon as his preparations were sufficiently advanced, to inform Tippoo that he was quite aware of his hostile proceedings at the Mauritius and elsewhere; that his Lordship's preparations had been made to repel any aggression which might be attempted; but that both he and his allies, being desirous of peace, were only anxious to place their relations with the Sultan upon a safe and distinctly understood footing; and, in order that this might be arranged, he required Tippoo to receive an ambassador, whom he named. This only produced an evasive answer, giving a ridiculously false explanation of the intercourse with the Mauritius, and putting aside the proposal of an embassy, but expressing boundless delight at the defeat of the French fleet by Lord Nelson, which Lord Wellesley had communicated to him, and applying to that nation every epithet of hatred and contempt, although it is now clearly ascertained that his despair on receiving the news of their defeat knew no bounds. Again Lord Wellesley urged the receiving of an ambassador, and no direct answer could be obtained, while preparations were actively making to increase every branch of the Mysore army.

At length Lord Wellesley transmitted to him on the 9th of January (1799) a letter, recapitulating his whole conduct and "once more calling upon

him, in the most serious and solemn manner, to assent to the admission of Major Doveton" (the ambassador), and earnestly requiring an answer within a day after the letter should reach him. Still the crafty Sultan gave no answer, though he continued his preparations ; and on the 7th of February he dispatched a French officer as his ambassador to the Executive Directory, with a renewed proposition for an offensive and defensive alliance to make war jointly on the English, partition their territories, and expel them from India. At the same time with the dispatch of this mission, he at length sent an answer, in which he said he was going upon a hunting excursion, and that Major Doveton might come to him, but unattended.

It was, however, now too late ; for on the 3rd of February (the Sultan's letter not arriving before the 13th) Lord Wellesley had ordered the army to march upon Seringapatam, and commence the siege without delay. Late, however, as the Sultan's consent to treat had been, and manifestly as it was designed only to gain time for his military preparations, and, above all, to postpone our attack until the season for operations, already far advanced, should be gone, Lord Wellesley directed General Harris, under whose command the army had marched some days before the answer arrived, to receive any ambassador whom Tippoo might send, and to treat upon the basis of his securing the Com-

pany and its allies, by abandoning the coast of Malabar, dismissing his French troops, and receiving residents from the Company and the Nizam. The instructions given to General Harris were not confined to the terms of the negotiation, but embraced the various contingencies which might happen, provided for almost every conceivable event, and only left that gallant and able officer his own proper province of leading on the army and superintending its operations. After the march was begun, and when on the eve of entering Mysore, the General received a final instruction of a most important description—he was on no account to conclude any treaty until a junction had been effected of the Madras and Bombay armies, and there was a fair prospect of successfully beginning the siege.

The General entered Mysore on the 5th March, with an army said to be better equipped than any that had ever taken the field in the Peninsula, and amounting to about 22,000 men, of whom between 5000 and 6000 were Europeans, the rest natives. The Nizam's army, consisting of the English subsidiary force of 6000, and 16,000 of his own troops, had some weeks before been moved to the Carnatic, and joined General Harris at Vellore, before he entered Tippoo's territory. The Bombay army, of about 7000, moved upon Seringapatam, from the opposite quarter; and, although unexpected delays

occurred during the march of the Madras army, occasioned chiefly by the failure of the cattle and the carriage department, in about four weeks the whole force reached Seringapatam, after encountering a comparatively slight opposition; one battle having been fought by each army—both, though successful, yet by no means decisive. It is well known that the Duke of Wellington, then Colonel Wellesley, commanded a brigade in this memorable expedition, and distinguished himself by that great military capacity which has since, on a far wider theatre, shone forth with such extraordinary lustre. He was also placed by his brother at the head of a commission, judiciously formed for the purpose of conducting, under General Harris's authority, and in constant communication with him as well as with the government, all political operations during the advance of the army, as well as during the siege, and after its successful termination.

Never, perhaps, was an operation more complete in all its parts than this brilliant campaign. In a month Seringapatam was taken; the Sultan falling while fighting in its defence with his wonted valour, now heightened by despair. All his chief captains submitted to the conquerors; and the Rajah of Mysore, whose family had been dethroned by the usurpation of Tippoo's father, and were detained captive, and subjected to every ignominious treatment by the cruel tyrants, was called

to the throne of a portion of their former dominions, the rest being divided among the Company, the Nizam, and the Peishwah. There were found at Seringapatam papers confirming beyond a doubt the inferences respecting his hostile designs, drawn from Malartic's proclamation and the embassy to the Mauritius. But at the same time the correspondence shows the deep perfidy which formed so remarkable a feature in the character of this Eastern tyrant. An inextinguishable hatred of England breathes through the whole, animates the mass, and mixes itself with the great body of the documents. This was plainly sincere. But his attachment to the French Directory may not have been quite so real, excepting in so far as they were the enemies of his foes. In addressing the "Citizens Representatives" he is ready to "acknowledge the sublimity of the new French Constitution," and he offers its chiefs "alliance and fraternity." But this does not prevent him from writing at the same time to the Grand Signor and testifying "his boundless satisfaction on learning that the Turk is about to free his regions (Egypt) from the contamination of those shameless tribes" (the French), or from exhorting him, "by word and deed, to repel those abandoned infidels."

In surveying the operations of the war, however, and in comparing the Sultan's conduct of it with that of the campaigns in 1789, 90, and 91, we can

hardly avoid being struck with the inferior vigour and resources displayed by him upon the present occasion. His troops were better disciplined; his own courage and theirs was as high as ever; nor was there any want of disposition to contest every inch of ground. Yet whether it be from the greatness of the force brought to bear upon him; or from his chagrin at having failed in his attempts to put off the invasion till the monsoon should set in; or from the discomfiture of all his plans to obtain the help of the native powers, and the disappointment of his hopes of French assistance—certain it is, that we see none of those rapid and daring movements which more than once, in the former contest, reduced our chances of victory to the possibility of escape, and made our final success appear anything rather than a matter of certain calculation.

The conduct of the Mahratta war and of the expeditions against Scindiah and Holkar was marked by the same great capacity which had shone forth in the conquest of the Mysore. Those hostilities also offered an opportunity to the Marquess's brother of displaying the transcendent talents which have since been exhibited with such surpassing lustre—the talents of a great statesman not less than of a great captain. But the part of Lord Wellesley's policy which chiefly excited opposition in England was the subsidiary treaties

which he formed with several powerful princes, and by which the important dominions of Arcot, Oude, the Nizam, and the Peishwah were placed under a real subordination to the English government. The perfidies of the native princes, their disposition to league against our power with the view of expelling us from India, their inclination to court a French alliance in order to gain this their favourite object, rendered it really unsafe to leave them in a state of entire independence. We had been compelled to interfere in their affairs and to regulate the succession to their thrones upon each successive discovery of designs hostile to us, nay, threatening our very existence, the subversion of all the fabric of useful and humane and enlightened polity which we had erected on the ruins of their own barbarous system, and particularly the restriction of the cruel despotism under which the native millions had formerly groaned. On each successive occasion, therefore, of this description, Lord Wellesley compelled the government which he installed to make a perpetual treaty by which a stipulated force under our own command was to be maintained at the expense of the native power, and the control of all state affairs, save what related to the palace and the family of the nominal sovereign, was to be vested in the British resident. The fall of Tippoo Sultan did not more effectually consolidate our Indian empire and secure it against

all future dangers than the Subsidiary System thus introduced and established.

Among the dissentients on these subjects was found the prevailing party in the East India Company's direction. Lord Wellesley at one time resigned his government in consequence of their support being withdrawn, and was only prevailed on to retain his position at a most critical period of Indian history by the earnest intercession of Mr. Pitt's government, who gave him, as did Lord Sidmouth with his characteristic courage, sagacity, and firmness, their steady support.* Nothing, however, can be more satisfactory, nor anything more creditable to the Company, as well as to Lord Wellesley's administration, than the change of opinion manifested by that body towards the end of his life. An address was voted unanimously to him, upon the publication of his Dispatches, in 1837, and it is fit that I extract its concluding passage:—"To the eventful period of your Lordship's government the Court look back with feelings common to their countrymen; and, anxious that the minds of their servants should be enlarged by the instruction to be derived from the accumulated experience of eminent statesmen, they felt it a duty to diffuse widely the means of consulting a

* Lord Wellesley always gratefully acknowledged the merits and services of Lord Sidmouth, to whom he had through life been much attached.

work unfolding the principles upon which the supremacy of Britain in India was successfully manifested and enlarged under a combination of circumstances in the highest degree critical and difficult." With this view a hundred copies of the Dispatches were ordered to be sent to the different Presidencies in addition to those already transmitted, "as containing a fund of information of incalculable value to those actively engaged in the diplomatic, legislative, and military business of India."

A present of 20,000*l.* was also on this occasion voted to Lord Wellesley. He had ever shown the entire disregard of money which with so few exceptions has always marked great men. But especially was this displayed on one memorable occasion. He had given up to the army engaged in the conquest of Mysore his share, amounting to 100,000*l.*, of the booty which came to be distributed. This munificent sacrifice is recited by the Company in the vote of the present as one of its grounds.

It was not to conquest and to negotiation that Lord Wellesley's government confined its attention. He applied the same enlarged views to the improvement of the service, and to bettering the condition of the countless multitudes under his rule. That the arts of peace occupied their due share of his attention we have abundant proof in the establishment of the Calcutta College, the promotion of scientific researches, especially into the natural

history of the Peninsula, the opening the Indian commerce as far as the Company would allow, the aid given to missions, but under strict and necessary precaution of maintaining toleration, and avoiding all offence to the natives, and accompanied with the suppression of saugues, or human sacrifices. In the vigour of this act, so characteristic of the man, he was imitated by Lord William Bentinck, one of his ablest and best successors, whose peremptory ordinance at once put down the last remains of that abominable and bloody superstition, the suttees, or burning of widows on the graves of their husbands. In some of these measures, particularly those relating to the Calcutta College and the Indian trade, he was as much thwarted by the Honourable Company as in his foreign policy. But while that wary body denounced his measures as expensive to their treasury, they forgot to calculate how greatly that treasury had been increased by those very operations of which they always complained so bitterly. By his conquests, and his financial reforms, he had more than doubled their revenue, which from seven millions now reached fifteen. The spectacle of the sanctified Mrs. Cole's application to Mr. Loader's bottle of brandy in Foote's farce, or her wishes to have a small consignment of nuns to make her fortune in a season, and then leave her only the care of her soul, is not more edifying than that of the Honour-

able Company, always protesting against the addition of a foot to their territory, and denouncing the policy which trebled it, while they quietly took possession, without a murmur, of the gains thus acquired, at once relieving their consciences by the murmurs, and replenishing their purse by the spoil.*

Lord Wellesley returned from his glorious administration at a very critical period in our parliamentary history. Mr. Pitt was stricken with the malady which proved fatal—a typhus fever, caught from some accidental infection, when his system was reduced by the stomach complaints which he had long laboured under. He soon appointed a time when his friend might come to see him. This, their last interview, was in the villa on Putney Heath, where he died within a few days. Lord Wellesley called upon me there many years after; the house was then occupied by my brother-in-law, Mr. Eden, whom I was visiting. His Lordship showed me the place where these illustrious friends sat, meeting for the last time. Mr. Pitt was, he said, much emaciated and enfeebled, but retained his gaiety and his constitutionally sanguine disposition; he expressed his confident hopes of recovery.

* The detail into which I have entered on Lord Wellesley's Indian administration is due, not only to the importance of the subject, but to the authenticity of the materials. He himself examined in 1836 the views which I had taken of this complicated subject, so little familiar to statesmen in this country; and he declared that they correctly represented his proceedings and his policy.

In the adjoining room he lay a corpse the ensuing week ; and it is a singular and a melancholy circumstance, resembling the stories told of William the Conqueror's deserted state at his decease, that some one in the neighbourhood having sent a message to inquire after Mr. Pitt's state, he found the wicket open, then the door of the house, and, nobody answering the bell, he walked through the rooms till he reached the bed on which the minister's body lay lifeless, the sole tenant of the mansion of which the doors a few hours before were darkened by crowds of suitors alike obsequious and importunate, the vultures whose instinct haunts the carcasses only of living ministers.

It can hardly be doubted that the party of Mr. Pitt would gladly have rallied under Lord Wellesley had there been among them a leader ready for the House of Commons. But to place Lord Castlereagh or Mr. Canning in the command of their forces against the combined power of Mr. Fox, and Messrs. Grey, Sheridan, and Windham, would have been courting signal defeat. A wiser course was chosen, and the King is said to have had early intelligence of Mr. Fox's days being numbered. He therefore waited patiently until the time came when he could obtain the great object of his wishes, a restoration of the Tory party. First, he wished to have excited the country against the Whigs upon the failure of the investigation into the Princess of Wales's conduct ; for

then he would have availed himself of the strong feelings of the English people against conjugal misconduct, and their dislike of the illustrious husband, an object of his royal father's constant dislike. But before this plot had ripened he found that the cry of danger to the Church, and the universal feeling against the Irish Catholics, would better serve his purpose, and serve it without risk to the royal family. Accordingly, on this ground he fastened a quarrel upon his Whig servants; and they ceased for many a long year to rule the councils of the country.

It is a singular instance of George III.'s self-command and power of waiting his opportunity, that after Mr. Fox's death, when he had doomed in his own mind the Whig ministry to perdition, and while seeking eagerly the occasion to throw them down, he allowed them to dissolve Parliament, thereby entailing upon himself the necessity of a second dissolution within a few months.

Lord Wellesley kept aloof from all these transactions; and his enemies, particularly a person of the name of Paul, whom he had at one time served and afterwards refused to promote, attempted an impeachment. The failure of this scheme was signal, and ended in new votes by large majorities, approving of his Indian administration. But his extreme sense of propriety hindered him, while the impeachment was pending, from taking the government on Mr. Fox's death, when he might, as

soon as the Whigs resigned, have succeeded as prime minister.

In 1809 he was prevailed upon to accept the embassy to Spain; and the large and enlightened views which he soon took of all the questions of Spanish policy were, when made known to those most familiar with the affairs of the Peninsula, the subject of wonder and of unmixed applause. I have heard Lord Holland and Mr. Allen, with both of whom he freely corresponded on those matters, declare that he was the person whom they had ever known who most impressed them with the idea of a great statesman. Upon his return, at the end of 1809, he was with some difficulty prevailed upon by the King to accept the department of Foreign Affairs, which he continued to administer till the beginning of 1812, when irreconcilable differences with Mr. Perceval, his narrow views of policy in all the departments of the state, his bigotry on the Catholic Question, his niggard support of the Spanish war, made it impossible to remain longer his colleague. At his death Lord Wellesley was commissioned by the Prince Regent to form a Coalition Government, and negotiated for some days with Lord Grenville and Lord Grey for that desirable object. The Regent's sincerity was more than doubtful. So Lord Wellesley soon found, and gave up the task as hopeless.

Upon Lord Liverpool's accession to the vacant

premiership, he continued to discharge his parliamentary duty, guided by the independent and enlightened principles which he had ever professed. He brought forward the Catholic Question in 1812, and only lost it by a majority of one, in a House where the cause was deemed the most hopeless. In 1819 he made a magnificent speech in support of the Government, when he deemed the peace of the country, and the safety of her institutions, threatened by the proceedings of the demagogue party. But while I acknowledged the ability he now displayed, and admired the youthful vigour which so many years, and years partly spent in Eastern climes, had not been able to impair, I could not avoid feeling that his old anti-jacobin fervour had been revived by sounds rather than substance, and that he had shaped his conduct unconstitutionally, by assuming that the bad times of 1793 and 1794 were renewed in our later day. Lord Grenville's conduct was on this occasion liable to the same remark. Not, however, that even we, who most strenuously opposed the coercive measures, had any doubt of the perils attending the abuse of unlimited public meetings. We felt that it must lead to evil, and that, if unrestrained, it would end either in changing or in shaking the constitution. Lord Hutchinson, I well remember, openly avowed his satisfaction that measures which had become of pressing necessity had been taken

rather by a Tory than a Whig Government ; and declared that public meetings must either be regulated or forbidden. But we disapproved the course taken by the Ministers, and we were persuaded that the accounts of treasonable conspiracies were greatly exaggerated, holding it certain that, how dangerous soever the very large meetings might be, the plots sought to be connected with them were hatched in the brains of spies and other Government emissaries.*

In 1825 Lord Wellesley accepted the high office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. His government was signalised by persevering attempts to obtain the emancipation of the Catholics, and he was of course the object of bitter hatred and unsparing attack from the more violent of the Orange party. His recall took place upon the formation of the Wellington ministry in 1828. When at the end of 1830 the Whigs came into office, he was ap-

* Mention having been made in the text of Lord Wellesley's early anti-jacobin prejudices giving a bias to his conduct in 1819, it is only fair to add that these prejudices in no wise warped his judgment in spring, 1815. He at that critical moment was against a renewal of the war, and friendly to continuing at peace with France, though under Napoleon. He was intimately persuaded that both the French people and their ruler were entirely changed in their feelings and views, and that we had no right to burthen ourselves with all the heavy costs of a new war, independent of its risk, in order to restore the Bourbons a second time against the people's will.

pointed Lord Steward of the Household, and in 1833 he resumed the Viceroyalty of Ireland, which he held until the change of Government in 1834. He then resigned at once his high office, not waiting till he should be pressed by the new Government to retain it, as in all probability he would have been. He held himself bound in honour to the Whig party to retire upon their very unceremonious dismissal by King William. Steady to his party, he was actively engaged in preparing the opposition to the Peel Ministry; arranged the important measure of the speakership, the first blow which that Ministry received; and with his own hand drew the resolution which on the 8th of April brought it to a close. It cannot be affirmed that the Whig party was equally steady to him. On their accession to power, I have heard him say, he received the first intimation that he was not to return to Ireland from one of the door-keepers at the House of Lords, whom he overheard, as he passed, telling another person of my friend Lord Mulgrave's appointment.

The secret history of this transaction is not yet known; and we are bound to disbelieve all reports which the gossip of the idle, or the malice of the spiteful, or the mistaken zeal of friends may propagate. Two things, however, are certain: *first*, Lord Wellesley's removal from among the Whigs—that is, his not being re-appointed in April, 1835—could not by possibility be owing to any

the least doubt of his great capacity for affairs continuing as vigorous as ever, because I have before me a dispatch, in which the head of the Government, as late as the end of August, 1834, declares "the solving of the problem of Irish government to be a task every way worthy of Lord Wellesley's powerful and comprehensive understanding;" adding, "You will not suspect me of flattery when I say that in my conscience I believe there is no man alive more equal to such a work, and more capable of effecting it than your Excellency"—*secondly*, falsehood never assumed a more foul or audacious form than in the eulogies lavished upon the new Government at the expense of Lord Wellesley's Irish administration. That Government, it was said, never would have passed the Coercion Act of 1833! Indeed! But that Coercion Act came from Lord Melbourne's own office, when as Home Secretary he presided over the Irish department; the only mitigation of the Act having been effected by the Government of 1834 on Lord Wellesley's suggestion. The successor of Lord Wellesley, it was also said, for the first time administered the Government fairly and favourably towards the Catholics. Indeed! but Lord Wellesley first brought forward Catholics for the higher offices in the law, and continually propounded measures in their favour, which for some reason or other were never carried into effect. There are two classes of persons who must be

covered with shame upon reading such passages as the following, extracted from his Lordship's dispatch of September, 1834; the vile calumniators of Lord Wellesley as never having given the Catholics fair play, and those who suffered their supporters to varnish over their weakness by an invidious contrast of their doings with his, profiting by the constantly repeated falsehood that they were the first who ever treated with justice the professors of a religion to which the bulk of the people belonged. "I think it would be advisable (says his Excellency) to open three seats on the judicial bench, and to take one of the judges from the Roman Catholic bar. This would give the greatest satisfaction to the whole Roman Catholic body. Your lordship, I am convinced, will concur with me in opinion that the Roman Catholics of Ireland have never yet been admitted to the full benefit of the laws passed for their relief. Entitled by law to admission into almost any office in the state, they have been, and are still, practically excluded from almost every branch of the executive administration of the Government. The few admitted into the station of assistant-barristers, or into the police, only serve to mark the right to admission, without any approach to an equitable distribution of official benefit. It is impossible to suppose that a whole nation can repose confidence, or act cordially with a Government when so large a portion of the people are practically excluded

from all share in the higher offices of the state, while their right to admission is established by law. I therefore conceive that one of the first steps towards the pacification of Ireland should be the correction of this defect; and for this purpose I submit to your lordship's judgment that it is expedient to admit a certain proportion of Roman Catholics into the privy council, to the bench, to the higher stations of the law, to other efficient civil offices, and to increase their numbers in the police and in other establishments. This system should be commenced at the same time with the new legal appointments, which would form a main part of it. I would also appoint some Roman Catholics of distinction to the privy council. 'This would be a commencement which I can venture to assure your lordship would be safe and most satisfactory to the whole Roman Catholic body of Ireland.' He then encloses a list of those Roman Catholics whom he recommends, and requests an affirmative answer, that he "may immediately make the necessary official applications to the Home Secretary."

In making public this remarkable document, I violate no official confidence; for though I held the Great Seal at the time when this important correspondence passed, I was not, owing to some accident, made acquainted with any part of it until the present time (1843*). I am therefore wholly

* This was written in that year.

free from the responsibility of having neglected so material a communication. When the Ministers met in Cabinet at the end of October, they had hardly time left, before their dismissal, to mature any plan such as that which Lord Wellesley so earnestly recommended; but some of those Ministers, aware of that plan, must have felt that they received a strange piece of good fortune, if not of very strict justice, when they found themselves all of a sudden, in May, 1835, zealously supported by the traducers of Lord Wellesley, and upon the express ground of their being just to the Catholics, whom he had never thought of relieving. I have repeatedly, in my place, while these Ministers were present and in power, denounced the gross injustice and the scandalous falsehood of those their supporters, who professed to prefer them to Lord Grey's Government and mine, because we had passed a Coercion Bill which had the entire concurrence and the cordial support of the very Ministers now declared to be incapable of suffering such a measure; and I have expressed my astonishment that any class of men could submit to receive support upon such grounds, without at once declaring that the blame and the praise were alike falsely bestowed; but I was not on these occasions aware of the extreme to which this falsehood was carried, as regarded Lord Wellesley's administration, and I was not till now informed of the extraordinary

self-command which my illustrious friend had shown in suffering all such imputations without any attempt to protect himself from their force.*

A very useful lesson of caution is taught by this passage in Lord Wellesley's life. How often do we see vehement and unceasing attacks made upon a minister or a statesman, perhaps not in the public service, for something which he does not choose to defend or explain, resting his claims to the confidence of his country upon his past exertions and his known character ! Yet these assaults are unremittingly made upon him, and the people believe that so much noise could not be stirred up without something to authorise it. Sometimes the objects of the calumny are silent from disdain, sometimes from knowing that the base propagators of it will only return to their slander the more eagerly after their conviction of falsehood ; but sometimes also the silence may be owing to official reserve. We here see in Lord Wellesley's case a most remarkable example of that reserve. All the while that the

* Equal abstinence and dignity did he show in never allowing the laudatory opinions expressed of him in 1834 to be cited as an answer to the statement industriously whispered about rather than openly promulgated, by way of extenuating the refusal to re-appoint him in May, 1835. It was said that he no longer had the vigour of mind required for the difficulties of the Administration ; but Lord Melbourne declared, a few months before, that no one was so fit to grapple with those difficulties.

disseminators of slander were proclaiming him as abandoning the Catholics—him who had been the first to move, and within a hair's-breadth to obtain, their emancipation in the Lords, the stronghold of their enemies—all the while that they were exalting his successors at his expense, by daily repeating the false assertion that they for the first time conceived the just and politic plan of removing every obstruction arising from religion to a full enjoyment of the public patronage—all the while that they were placing the Melbourne Ministry upon a pinnacle, as having first adopted this liberal system of government—there lay in the Government repositories the original (in Lord Wellesley's the copy) of a dispatch, explaining, recommending, enforcing the necessity of that course, and stating his desire to carry the plan into immediate execution, when the return of the King's messenger should bring the permission, which he solicited so earnestly, of his official superiors. If that permission was delayed for three months, until the Ministry was changed, and Lord Wellesley followed them into retirement, he at least was not to be blamed for the mischance; yet for eight years did he remain silent under those charges—for eight years did the Ministry maintain the same silence under the support which those charges brought them—nay, with the parliamentary majorities which those charges daily afforded them;

and now, for the first time, that document sees the light, in which was recorded an irrefragable proof that the charges were not merely false, but the very reverse of the truth—that the support thus given rested upon a foundation positively opposite to the fact.

The excellence of Lord Wellesley's speeches has been mentioned. The taste which he had formed from study of the great Greek exemplars kept him above all tinsel and vulgar ornaments, and made him jealously hold fast by the purity of our language; but it had not taught him the virtue of conciseness; and he who knew the *Περὶ Στεφάνου* by heart, and always admitted its unmeasurable superiority to the Second Philippic and the Pro Milone, yet formed his own style altogether upon the Roman model. That style, indeed, was considerably diffuse; and the same want of compression, the same redundancy of words, accompanied, however, by substantial though not always needful sense, was observable, though much less observable, in his poetical pieces, which generally possessed very high excellence. It is singular to mark the extraordinary contrast which his thoughts and his expressions presented in this respect. There was nothing superfluous or roundabout in his reasoning—nothing dilatory or feeble in the conceptions which produced his plans. He saw his object at once, and with intuitive sagacity; he saw

it in its true colours and real dimensions ; he at one glance espied the path, and the shortest path, that led to it ; he in an instant took that path, and reached his end. The only prolixity that he ever fell into was in explaining or defending the proceedings thus concisely and rapidly taken. To this some addition was not unnaturally made by the dignity which the habits of vice-regal state made natural to him, and the complimentary style which, if a very little tinctured with Oriental taste, was very much more the result of a kindly and generous nature.

I have felt precluded from indulging in general description by the intimacy of my intercourse with this great statesman, and I have accordingly kept my promise to the reader of letting the narrative of his actions draw his portrait ; but it would be unjust to omit all mention of that lofty nature which removed him above every thought of personal interest, and made him so careless of all sordid considerations, that I verily believe he spent several fortunes without ever having lost a farthing at play, or ever having indulged in any other expensive vice. His original embarrassments, and from these he never was relieved, arose entirely from generously paying his father's debts.* He

* The Corporation of Dublin unanimously voted him their freedom in token of the admiration which this conduct had excited.

was exceedingly fond of glory, and loved dearly the fame that should follow such great deeds as his; but he had no kind of envy, no jealousy of other men's greatness; and a better proof can hardly be given of his magnanimity than the extreme warmth of the praise which he lavished profusely on all the great commanders whom he employed. He earnestly pressed, but it is strange to say, vainly pressed, even their promotion to the peerage sixteen years before it took place, without ever harbouring a thought of the tendency which their elevation might have to eclipse his own fame in vulgar eyes.

Nothing could be more gentle and affectionate than his whole disposition; and during his latter years, next to his books, nothing so refreshed his mind as the intercourse with those friends in whose society and converse he delighted. It is impossible for me to revise this paper and not have present to my mind, and again submitted to my admiration, the brilliant and successful administration of another most valued friend. Need I name him whose fame is inscribed on the latest page of Eastern history—Lord Ellenborough? The reader of the foregoing pages will at once recognise the congenial spirit of these two great governors.

L O R D H O L L A N D.

IT is a very mournful reflection for me that, much as I might have expected the sacred duty to devolve upon me of paying a just tribute to Lord Wellesley's memory, I should also be called to commemorate the excellence of one whom I might far less have looked to survive, and whose loss made all his friends feel that the value of their own lives was now greatly impaired. It may be doubted if any man in any age ever had so few enemies, so many attached friends, as Lord Holland; and no man certainly could better deserve the universal affection of which he was the object.

His succession to the peerage at a very early age, on his father's death, prevented him from ever sitting in the House of Commons, and thus passing through the best school of English statesmen. His own severe illness, while yet at Eton, gave his uncle, Mr. Fox, a double alarm; for he was not only on the point of losing a nephew whom he loved as if he had been his only child, but ran the imminent risk of being taken from the House

of Commons in the zenith of his fame as a debater and a party chief. He was then in the North of Italy ; and the messenger from Devonshire House, commissioned to summon him home on account of the King's illness, met him at Bologna. Mr. Fox had received intelligence of Lord Holland's dangerous illness ; and the alarm occasioned by the appearance of the courier was speedily changed into despair by a few words which he dropped, intimating that " he must be dead by this time." Great was Mr. Fox's relief and joy, probably in more ways than one, upon finding that the King was the person alluded to. Many years after this period I saw his banker at Vicenza, who was acquainted with the circumstance of Mr. Fox's alarm ; and I was much struck with the familiar notion of this great man's celebrity, which seemed to have reached that remote quarter, at a time when political intelligence was so much less diffused than it has been since the French Revolution. The banker mentioned having given professionally a very practical proof of his respect for the name ; he had cashed a bill for the expense of his journey home, though there was no letter of introduction presented ; " but I knew him," said the Cambist, " by the prints." The rapid journey home to join the fray then raging in the House of Commons laid the foundation of the liver complaint, which eighteen years later ended in dropsy, and terminated

his life ; but he was relieved on his arrival from all anxiety upon account of his nephew, whom he found perfectly restored to health.

Lord Holland went to Christ Church on leaving Eton ; and passed his time more gaily than studiously, the companion of Mr. Canning, Lord Carlisle, and Lord Granville. But, like them, he laid both at school and college a broad foundation of classical learning, which through his after-life he never ceased successfully to cultivate.

Upon entering the House of Lords he found the prospects of the Whig party as gloomy as it was possible to contemplate. Before they had nearly recovered from the effects of the ill-starred coalition, their dissensions among themselves upon the great questions of the French Revolution and the war had split them in twain, leaving some of their most powerful families, as the houses of Cavendish, Bentinck, and Wentworth, and some of their most eminent leaders, as Burke, Windham, Loughborough, and North, to join the now resistless forces of Mr. Pitt. Their Parliamentary strength was thus reduced to a mere fraction of the already diminished numbers that had survived the defeat of 1784 ; and the alarm, not by any means unnatural or unfounded, which the progress of the French arms, and the excesses of the Revolution, had excited throughout the country seemed to

marshal all the friends of our established institutions, whether in Church or in State, and even all men of property and all men of sound and moderate opinions, against those who were branded with the names of revolutionists, levellers, un-English, friends and disciples of the French. For the first time the Whig party, essentially aristocratic as it always had been in former ages, in some sort alien to all popular courses, and standing mainly upon patrician influence against both the court and the multitude, as it had proved itself in its very last struggle for power, had become mixed up with the very extremes of popular enthusiasm, extremes to which the people, even the middle orders, were very averse; and which were only favoured by two classes, alike void of influence in the practical affairs of State, the philosophic few and the mere vulgar. For the first time, they who had ever been reformers on the most restricted scale were fain to join the cry for unlimited reforms, both of Parliament and of all our institutions. The leaders might retain their ancient prejudices in favour of aristocracy and against reform, and might confine their Parliamentary efforts to exposing the misconduct of the war, endeavouring to restore peace, and resisting the measures of coercion adopted by Mr. Pitt unconstitutionally to protect the existing constitution. But the bulk of the party became

more or less connected with the reformers, and even the few who in the House of Commons still adhered to the standard of Mr. Fox were for the most part imbued with the reform faith. The Whig party indeed was then wofully reduced in strength. Mr. Pitt could with certainty carry whatever measures he propounded; and at length, after wasting some years in fruitless attempts to resist his power, having been able to muster no more than 53 votes against suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, 38 for putting an end to the war, and 45 for censuring the illegal act of misapplying the money voted by Parliament, the Opposition, wearied of impotent efforts and impatient of unvaried defeat, retired from their attendance in Parliament, retaining the seats, and refusing to perform the duties of representatives.

It was at this most inauspicious period in the whole Whig history, that Lord Holland entered the House of Lords, where there could hardly be said to remain even the name of an Opposition party. He joined himself, however, to the few supporters of his uncle's principles still to be found there lingering on the Opposition benches,—Lord Lauderdale, the Duke of Bedford, occasionally the first Lord Lansdowne, whose connexion with Lord Holland, and steady opposition to the war, had now well nigh reconciled him with the party, although he always took a line more guided by

general principles of policy, and more enlarged in its views, than suited the narrow-minded notions of factious men.

Lord Holland's course was now, as ever through his whole public life, one which did equal honour to his head and to his heart. The vigilant enemy of abuses; the staunch supporter of the constitution as established in 1688; the friend of peace abroad, and of liberty all over the world; the champion, especially, of religious liberty and the sacred rights of conscience, and that upon sound principles of universal freedom, not from any tinge of fanaticism, from which no man, not even his illustrious kinsman, was more exempt;—he soon obtained that respect in Parliament, and that general esteem among reflecting men in the country, which the mere exhibition of great talents can never command, and which is only to be earned by honest consistency in pursuing a course commendable for its wisdom, or by its sincerity extorting applause from those who disapprove it. During the period of above five and forty years that he continued before the eyes of his countrymen, sometimes filling high office, more frequently engaged in opposition to the Court and the Ministry of the day, it is certain that whensoever any occasion arose of peril to the great cause of toleration, the alarmed eye instinctively turned first of all to Lord Holland as the refuge of the persecuted; and as often as the

constitution in any other respect was endangered, or any bad, exclusive, illiberal policy placed in jeopardy our character abroad and the interests of peace,* to him, among the foremost, did the supporters of a wise and catholic policy look for countenance and comfort in their efforts to arrest the course of evil.

To a higher praise still he was justly entitled—the praise of extraordinary disinterestedness in all questions of colonial policy. In right of Lady Holland, a great Jamaica heiress, he was the owner of extensive possessions cultivated by slave-labour; but there was no more strenuous advocate of the abolition both of the slave trade and slavery; and Lady Holland herself, the person more immediately interested in the continuance of those enormous abuses, had too much wisdom and too much virtue ever to interpose the least difference of opinion on this important subject.

Although he naturally felt towards his uncle all

* I may state what I firmly and with knowledge believe, that Lord Holland, in the lamentable defection from the cause of peace which was made by the Whig Government in 1840, was with the greatest difficulty prevented from resigning his office, and leaving the Ministry to prosecute, without the countenance of his high name, their disastrous course. Were I to add that his actual resignation was sent in to his colleagues, I think I should be guilty of no exaggeration. That he afterwards, during the short residue of his life, regretted not having persisted in this course, I also believe.

the warmth of filial affection, and looked up to him with the singular reverence with which men of extraordinary celebrity and extensive public influence are regarded by their family, he was wholly above the bigotry which suffers no tenet of its object to be questioned, and the enthusiasm which, dazzled by shining merits, is blind to undeniable faults. Not only was he ever ready to admit that the taste for play had proved ruinous to Mr. Fox's political fortunes, as well as his private—ascribing, indeed, fully more to its evil influence than could justly be charged upon it, for he was wont to say that this alone had prevented him from being Minister of the country—but he avoided several prejudices and tastes, if we may so speak of political errors, in which that great man indulged to the serious injury of his understanding and his accomplishments. Thus Mr. Fox, like General Fitzpatrick, Mr. Hare, Lord John Townsend, and others of that connexion, greatly undervalued the talents and pursuits of the Scotch, holding the Irish as infinitely their superiors, and not duly estimating the importance of the sterling good sense, the patient seeking after truth, and the reluctance to deviate from it in their statements, for which, and justly, the Scotch are famous. Lord Holland had no such prejudice: on the contrary, he greatly preferred the men of the North, and had no disinclination to their peculiar pursuits,

their metaphysics and their political economy, their eagerness after facts, their carelessness of fancies, their addiction to the useful, their disregard of the graces. In the speeches of Mr. Fox and his school—always, of course, excepting Mr. Burke—it was easy to observe a want of information upon many subjects well worthy the attention of statesmen, and an ignorance of which may indeed be held fatal to their character for profound and enlarged views of policy. They were well read in history, deeply versed in the principles of the constitution and its learning, and acquainted (Mr. Fox himself especially) with the policy and interests of foreign courts; but to these subjects, and to the debates in Parliament of former times, their information was confined; while Lord Holland scarcely ever addressed the House of Lords without showing that he was both a scholar in the best sense of the word, and had formed an acquaintance with various branches of knowledge which are far too much neglected in the education of English gentlemen. Upon everything relating to religious controversy he was in a particular manner well informed. His residence, too, in Spain at different times had filled his mind with an accurate and detailed knowledge both of the history and the literature of the Peninsula, and generally of the South of Europe. The liberal hospitality which he exercised at home, making Holland House the resort not only of the

most interesting persons composing English society, literary, philosophical, and political, but also of all belonging to those classes who ever visited this country from abroad, served to maintain and extend his acquaintance with whatever regarded the rest of Europe.

Lord Holland's powers as a speaker were of a very high order. He was full of argument, which he could pursue with great vigour and perfect closeness; copious in illustration; with a chaste and pure diction, shunning, like his uncle, everything extravagant in figure and unusual in phrase; often, like him, led away by an ingenuity, and like him not unfrequently led to take a trivial view of his subject, and to dwell upon some small matter which did not much help on the business in hand, but always keeping that in view, and making no sacrifices to mere effect. Declamation—solemn, sustained declamation—was the forte of neither, although occasionally the uncle would show that he could excel in that also, as Raphael has painted perhaps the finest fire-light piece in the world, and Titian the noblest landscape. Neither made any the least pretence to gracefulness of action, and both were exceedingly deficient in voice, the nephew especially, as he had little of the redeeming quality by which his uncle occasionally penetrated and thrilled his audience with those high and shrill notes that proceeded from him when, heated with his argu-

ment, he overpowered both his own natural hesitation and the faculties of his hearer. In Lord Holland the hesitation was so great as to be often painful; and, instead of yielding to the increased volume of his matter, it often made him breathless in the midst of his more vehement discourse. He wanted command of himself; and, seeming to be run away with, he was apt to lose the command over his audience. The same delicate sense of humour which distinguished Mr. Fox he also showed; and much of that exquisite Attic wit, which formed so large and so effective a portion of that great orator's argumentation, never uselessly introduced, always adapted nicely to the occasion, always aiding, and, as it were, clinching the reasoning.

Thus accomplished as he was for the rhetorical art, had his health, and a kind of indolence common to the Fox family—perhaps, too, their disdain of all preparation, all but natural eloquence—allowed him to study oratory more, it is difficult to say how high a place he might have reached among orators. Certainly no one could any day have been surprised to hear him deliver some great speech of equal merit with those of the illustrious kinsman whom he so much resembled. It was once said by Lord Erskine, on hearing him make, off-hand, a great display of argumentative power, “I shall complain of the Usher of the Black Rod: why did he not take Charles Fox into custody last night? What

the deuce business has a member of the other House to come up and make his speeches here?"

Of a Cabinet to which, by a singular combination of unlikely chances, he and the other Whigs belonged for eleven or twelve years, he was an efficient member. The places which he held (Privy Seal, and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster) had, especially the former, little duty attached to them. He administered the Duchy, however, with the greatest purity and impartiality; and when one of my legal reforms at one sweep cut off a third of his emoluments (above a thousand a-year), far from making the least resistance, any more than he did to the abolition of slavery, which soon after cost him twice as much, he stated his opinion to be entirely favourable to the change, and only said he was fortunate in having so long held the larger income. As a Minister, however, it is in the Cabinet that his merit must chiefly be estimated; and I can vouch for his having been, in all branches of the King's service, a most useful and excellent colleague. He was perfectly open and frank where he differed in opinion; quite candid, and free from prepossession in favour of his own views; full of information, especially on questions of foreign policy, and on those regarding the constitution; perfectly firm and resolute, when bold courses were to be taken. In occasions of this description, the four years that we passed together as colleagues

were abundantly fruitful, and he never was found wanting. He loved the excitement of office; he liked, from his excellently kind disposition, the disposal of patronage; but he was also very sincerely anxious for the opportunity of promoting his political views, and especially of furthering the cause of liberty everywhere, and maintaining that peace to which it is inseparably wedded. Hence he was more anxious to retain office, and more averse to risk the loss of it, than was always quite consistent with the high principles which he professed; and hence he made himself a party to the unconstitutional Government which, most injuriously to the country, and fatally to the interests of the Whig party, persisted in clinging to place for two years after all power in Parliament, all influence with the country, had departed from them, and nothing remained to prop up the crumbling edifice but the shadow of Court favour, now for the first time embraced as the shelter of a Whig Government from public indignation.

In part, possibly in great part, this misconduct of the Whig Ministry for the two years that followed May, 1839, is to be accounted for, certainly not excused, by their dread of facing the numerous place-lovers and place-hunters with whom they, like every other Government, were beset. In London, and in all corporate towns, there were of course swarms of creatures, hatched by the sunshine of Court favour,

and whose only dreams were of being enabled by the prolonged existence of the Cabinet, those already placed to continue battenning on the public carcass, those only in expectancy to wriggle themselves into a share of it. These it was hard to face and to thwart. The same influence, or the same fear of offending adherents, occasioned undoubtedly that other most reprehensible act, an act, too, most hurtful to the Liberal party, the dissolution in 1841. Who can for a moment believe that the Ministers themselves expected to obtain anything like a majority in the new Parliament? Then what possible right had they to make their Sovereign dissolve in order to increase the difficulties of those, her servants, who were to be their successors in office? This they well knew; and of this I warned them by private remonstrance, as indeed I took the liberty of humbly counselling my gracious Sovereign upon the measure, thereby discharging my duty as a Peer of Parliament. But "the pressure from without" was too powerful. Some score of members fancied their seats would be more secure were their own friends in office during the general election, than if that event happened when their adversaries were in power; and to their importunate clamour the Ministers were fain to yield. For this I find it far more difficult to give any excuse on Lord Melbourne's part, than for his proceedings in May, 1839, because I know the excellent nature

of my old and valued friend too well to doubt that his retaining office then arose from a feeling, a mistaken one certainly, of duty to the person of the Queen. It may be unpleasant for any Minister to thwart the views of persons as active as they are insignificant in all respects save their power of being troublesome. But then it is his most sacred duty to disregard their buzz. No man in office, no leader of a party in this country, whether in the possession or in the pursuit of power, can be without the courage to face and to resist his adversaries; this is a very ordinary daring indeed. But he is utterly unfit to hold office, or to lead a party, who has not the higher and nobler courage to face and to resist his followers, and to hold his path onward regardless of their clamour, alike immoveable from his fixed and stable resolves by the sordid howl of placemen, or the louder shout that proceeds from the multitude—from the *ardor civium prava jubentium*. To all who flinch from this I could read innumerable lessons in the striking contrast afforded by the official conduct, but indeed by the whole public life, of my dear and venerated friend Lord Grey, whose absence from the scene of debate has of late been so deeply lamented by every lover of his country, to whatever class or party he might belong.

Lord Holland's literary pursuits were varied and successful; for without giving much of his mind to composition, his 'Life of Lope de Vega,' and one

or two other productions, have a rare degree of excellence. The style is animated and classical; the narrative clear; the remarks sagacious and acute; the translations executed with a closeness and fidelity, and at the same time a poetical felicity, that place him in the highest rank of translators; for instead of giving, like some manglers of Dante, a rugged version as literal as it is unpoetical, and affording not a glimpse of the awful Florentine's figure, we have in Lord Holland's masterly performance a poem closely literal, rendering the very Spanish itself and almost in the same number of words, while it is as much imbued with poetry as if it were originally English. To execute such a work as this is extremely difficult, and far transcends the power of him who fancies he can translate because he knows the foreign language, without possessing any mastery over his mother tongue. It is a difficulty superadded to that of the measure and to that of the rhyme; and accordingly, very few have ever vanquished it. Dryden* and Sotheby

* There is not more poetry in Lucretius's description of hell than in Dryden's version, but it is not like Lucretius. Nor is there so much poetry in Virgil's

"*Hic ver perpetuum atque alienis mensibus ætas,*"
as in Sotheby's

"Here spring perpetual leads the laughing hours,
And winter wears a wreath of summer flowers."

But the beauty lies in adding a flower to the Georgics. Lord Holland and Mr. Roscoe do not so treat their original and their reader; nor does Mr. Carey; but then theirs is

are poetical, without being close to their divine originals ; Cowper unites more of the two qualities than either of them ; Lord Holland and Mr. Roscoe stand at the head of the class ; and all that can be said in impeachment of this title is, that their efforts have only been directed to small pieces of poetry, and that on a larger scale they might not have been equally successful. I have mentioned Lord Holland's *forte* as a poet ; but he wrote several original pieces ; and I remember his showing me some political sonnets in the manner of Milton (the first of English sonneteers) which appeared, at least to so indifferent a judge as myself, possessed of very great merit. It is remarkable that, like his uncle, though so fond of poetry, he had no relish for the kindred art, the other branch of harmony. Music was positively disagreeable to them both—a remarkable instance of Shakspeare's extravagant error in a well-known passage of his plays.

His prose compositions were distinguished by the same severe taste, and the same strict regard to the purity of his English diction, which Mr. Fox is by some, certainly not by me, thought to have cherished in excess. But Lord Holland's prose style had still higher merits. It was luminous, animated, flowing, and free from the defect under which his illustrious relative's certainly laboured, not that which he him-

poetical English as well as literal version ; Mr. Carey's is nothing like poetry, nor very English.

self was afraid of, its resembling a speech, for that it wholly avoided by running into the opposite extreme; it was somewhat stiff and constrained, betokening a want of practice in writing, and at the same time a fear of writing too naturally and easily, as he spoke; for nothing can be more easy and flowing and graceful than the style of Mr. Fox's letters. Lord Holland's prose style had all this grace and flow: it may be well judged of, not only by his 'Life of Lope de Vega,' but by his excellent 'Preface to Lord Waldegrave's and Lord Orford's Remains,' and, above all, by the admirable protests which he entered upon the Lords' journals, and by the publication of which in a volume Mr. Moylan has rendered an acceptable service both to politics and letters.

After all, it was in his private and domestic capacity that Lord Holland's principal charm lay. No man's conversation was more delightful. It was varied, animated, passing "from grave to gay, from lively to severe;" full of information, chequered with the most admirable vein of anecdote, but also with deep remark, and aided by a rare power of mimicry, never indulged in a way to offend by its harshness. Whoever had heard him represent Lord Thurlow, or the late Lord Lansdowne, or the famous Duke of Brunswick, or George Selwyn, little needed to lament not having seen those celebrated personages. His advice was excellent; he viewed with

perfect calmness the whole circumstances of his friend who consulted him ; he foresaw all difficulties and consequences with intuitive perception and never-failing sagacity ; he threw his whole soul into the discussion ; and he was entirely free from the bias as well of selfishness as of prejudice in the counsels which he gave. The great delight of those who approached him was certainly in the amiable disposition of his heart, and of a temper so perfectly sweet, so perseveringly mild, that nothing could ruffle it for an instant, nor any person, nor any passing event, make the least impression upon its even surface. Many tempers are equal and placid constitutionally, but then this calm results from their being cold ; the waters are not troubled, because their surface is frozen. Lord Holland's temper, on the contrary, like his uncle's, was warm, excitable, lively, animated. Yet I knew him intimately for five-and-thirty years, during a portion of which we had political and even party differences ; I had during the most of these years almost daily intercourse with him ; I can positively assert that though I saw him often sorely tried, and fear me I was now and then among those who tried him, I never for one moment perceived that there was in his composition the least element of anger, spite, peevishness, or revenge. In my whole experience of our race I never saw such a temper, nor anything that at all resembled it.

His was the disposition of the Fox family. They have a noble and lofty character; their nature is generous and humane. Selfishness, meanness, craft, are alien to their whole composition. Open, manly, confiding, combining the highest qualities of the understanding with the best feelings of the heart, and marked throughout by the innocent simplicity of infancy; no wonder that they win the affections of all who approach them—that is to say, who approach so near and know them so long as to be familiar with them—for both Mr. Fox and his nephew had the manners, somewhat repulsive at first, of patrician life; and the uncle, especially, was for a while even severely forbidding to strangers. It must be added that their aristocratic propensities were not confined to manner; they had the genuine Whig predilection for that kind of support, and regarded, perhaps justly regarded, the union of great families as absolutely necessary to maintain the popular cause against the Court. Mr. Fox, however, went a little further; and showed more complacency in naming highly-born supporters, than might seem altogether to consist with a high popular tone, or with the tenets of a philosophical statesman. It is to be added that with the simplicity of an infantine nature, they had the defect, as regards their affections, of that tender age. Their feelings were strong, but not deep; the impressions made on their heart were passing, and

soon effaced. I have often rallied and sometimes remonstrated with my friend on this peculiarity, when I saw him as I thought regarding men rather with the eyes of a naturalist than a brother, and rather taking an interest in observing their habits and marking their peculiarities, than feeling as deeply as their relation to us required.* But with these imperfections (how trifling compared to his virtues!) it is painful to think he is gone for ever; and cruel to survey the blank he has left. Once more one is forced mournfully to exclaim,—“*Eheu ! quanto minus est cum aliis versari quam tui meminisse !*”

It would be a very imperfect account of Lord Holland which should make no mention of the friend who for the latter and more important part of his life shared all his thoughts and was never a day apart from him, Mr. John Allen; or the loss which in him the world of politics and of science, but still more, our private circle, has lately had to

* One of the most able and learned men whom I have ever known, and one of the most sagacious observers, Mr. R. P. Smith, who read these pages, and well knew Lord Holland, with whom he was nearly connected by marriage, while he acknowledged the general accuracy of the portrait I had drawn, objected to this portion, unless an addition were made, in which I entirely concur, that after ever so long an absence from any of his friends his warmth of affection revived, and was as great as before the separation.

deplore—another blank which assuredly cannot be filled up. He was educated at Edinburgh as a physician, and stood far at the head of all his contemporaries as a student of the sciences connected with the healing art ; but he also cultivated most successfully all the branches of intellectual philosophy, and was eminent in that famous school of metaphysics, for his extensive learning and his unrivalled power of subtle reasoning. For some years he lectured most ably on Physiology, but before entering on practice he accepted an invitation to attend Lord Holland's family, during the peace of Amiens, on their journey first to France, then to Spain, where they remained till the year 1805. The materials which he collected in the latter country for a complete account of it, both historical and statistical, were of great extent and value ; and a considerable portion of the work was completed, when the pleasures of political discussion, working with the natural indolence of his habits as he advanced in life, occasioned him to lay it aside ; and of late years he chiefly confined his labours to some very learned papers upon the antiquarian lore of the English constitution in the 'Edinburgh Review.' He also published, in 1830, a learned and luminous work upon the ancient history of that constitution.

He had originally been a somewhat indiscriminate admirer of the French Revolution, and was

not of the number of its eulogists whom the excesses of 1793, and 1794, alienated from its cause. Even the Directorial tyranny had not opened his eyes to the evils of its course ; but a larger acquaintance with mankind, more of what is termed “ knowledge of the world,” greatly mitigated the strength of his opinions, and his minute study of the ancient history of our own constitution completed his emancipation from earlier prejudices—nay, rather cast his opinions into the opposite scale ; for it is certain that during the last thirty or forty years of his life, in other words, during all his political life, far from tolerating revolutionary courses, or showing any tenderness towards innovations, he was a reformer on so small a scale that he could hardly be brought to approve of any change at all in our Parliamentary constitution. He held the measure of 1831-32 as all but revolutionary ; augured ill of its effects on the structure of the House of Commons ; and regarded it as having in the result worked great mischief on the composition of that body, whatever benefit it might have secured to the Whigs as a party movement. Lord Holland had made up his mind to an entire approval of the scheme as necessary, if not for the country, at least for the Liberal party, to which he was devoted ; and he supported it, as his uncle had done the far less extensive reform proposed by Lord Grey in 1797, which, less as it was, very much exceeded

any reform views of his own—supported it as a party measure, necessary for keeping together the Liberal body and consolidating their power.

Although Mr. Allen, during the latter and principal period of his life, never abandoned his scientific pursuits, retaining his full knowledge of physical and moral science, and his early taste for such speculations, yet it was chiefly between the politics of the day and the constitutional history of this country that he divided his time. No one could be more useful as an adviser upon all political measures, because he clearly saw their tendency, and never for a moment suffered himself to be led astray by party prejudice or popular clamour. Indeed, like all who, in the enthusiasm of younger years, have been for a while beguiled into extravagant democratic opinions, he rather leant too severely against merely popular courses, and was somewhat too much inclined to have the public affairs which are directed for the good of the people managed with as little as possible of their interference or consent—forgetting that no real security for those affairs taking that direction can be had, except by giving a sufficient control to the popular voice ; but chiefly of the Court he was always distrustful, and herein he had the genuine Whig spirit excited and confirmed by his deep study of our former history. The only failing which seemed occasionally to lessen the weight of his counsel was

a certain irritability of temper and impatience of contradiction, especially upon subjects which he had deeply studied, and on which he had formed a clear and strong opinion. It must be said that the by-stander could well sympathise with those little ebullitions when they escaped him in argument with some sciolist, or some every-day politician whose whole knowledge of his subject was picked up in the clubs, or gathered from the papers of the morning, or at best gleaned from the recent volumes of the 'Parliamentary Debates.'

If it be asked what was the peculiar merit, the characteristic excellence of Mr. Allen's understanding, the answer is not difficult to make. It was the rare faculty of combining general views with details of fact, and thus at once availing himself of all that theory or speculation presents for our guide, with all that practical experience affords to correct those results of general reasoning. This great excellence was displayed by him in everything to which he directed his mind, whether it were the political questions of the day, which he treated as practically as the veriest drudge in any of the public offices, and yet with all the enlargement of view which marked the statesman and the philosopher; or the speculations of history, which he studied at once with the acumen that extracts from it as an essence the general progress of our species, after the manner of Voltaire and Millar; and with the

minute observation of facts and weighing of evidence which we trace through the luminous and picturesque pages of Robertson and Gibbon. He for whom no theory was too abstract, no speculation too general, could so far stoop to the details of practical statesmanship as to give a friend, proceeding for the first time on a delicate and important mission, this sound advice:—"Don't ever appear anxious about any point, either in arguing to convince those you are treating with, or in trying to obtain a concession from them. It often may happen that your indifference will gain a much readier access to their minds. Earnestness and anxiety are necessary for one addressing a public assembly—not so for a negotiator."

The character of Mr. Allen was of the highest order. His integrity was sterling, his honour pure and untarnished. No one had a more lofty disdain of those mean tricks to which, whether on trifles or matters of importance, worldly men have too frequent recourse. Without the shadow of fanaticism in any of its forms, he was, in all essential particulars, a person of the purest morals; and his indignation was never more easily roused than by the aspect of daring profligacy or grovelling baseness. His feelings, too, were warm; his nature kind and affectionate. No man was a more steady or sincere friend; and his enmity, though fierce, was placable.

It may naturally be asked how it happened that one of his great talents, long experience, and many rare accomplishments, intimately connected as he was with the leading statesmen of his time (the Ministers of the Crown for the last ten years of his life), should never have been brought into public life, nor ever been made in any way available to the service of the country? Nor can the answer to this question be that he had no powers of public speaking, and would, if in Parliament, have been for the most part a silent member; because it would not be easy to name a more unbroken silence than was for many long years kept by such leading Whigs as Mr. Hare, Lord John Townsend, and General Fitzpatrick, without whom, nevertheless, it was always supposed that the Whig phalanx would have been wanting in its just proportions; and also because there are many important, many even high political, offices that can well and usefully be filled by men wholly unused to the wordy war; yet Mr. Allen never filled any place except as Secretary, nay Under Secretary, for a few months, to the Commissioners for treating with America in 1806. Then I fear we are driven, in accounting for this strange fact, to the high aristocratic habits of our Government, if the phrase may be allowed; and can comprehend Mr. Allen's entire exclusion from power in no other way than by considering it as now a fixed and settled rule that there is in this

country a line drawn between the ruling caste and the rest of the community—not, indeed, that the latter are mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, but that, out of a profession like the bar, intimately connected with politics, or out of the patrician circles themselves the monopolists of political preferment, no such rise is in ordinary cases possible. The genius of our system, very far from consulting its stable endurance, appears thus to apportion its labours and its enjoyment, separating the two classes of our citizens by an impassable line, and bestowing freely upon the one the sweat and the toil, while it reserves strictly for the other the fruit and the shade.

APPENDIX.

[Walpole and Bolingbroke do not belong to the reign of George III. But it is impossible well to understand Lord Chatham without considering Walpole also. However, the great importance of continually holding up Walpole to the admiration of all statesmen, and Bolingbroke, except for his genius, to their reprobation, is the chief ground of inserting this Appendix.]

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

THE antagonist whom Lord Chatham first encountered on his entering into public life was the veteran Walpole, who instinctively dreaded him the moment he heard his voice ; and having begun by exclaiming, “ We must muzzle that terrible Cornet of horse ! ” either because he found him not to be silenced by promotion, or because he deemed punishment in this case better than blandishment, ended by taking away his commission, and making him an enemy for ever. It was a blunder of the first order ; it was of a kind, too, which none less than Walpole were apt to commit : perhaps it was the most injudicious thing, possibly the only very

injudicious thing, he ever did ; certainly it was an error for which he paid the full penalty before he ceased to lead the House of Commons and govern the country.

Few men have ever reached and maintained for so many years the highest station which the citizen of a free state can hold, who have enjoyed more power than Sir Robert Walpole, and have left behind them less just cause of blame, or more monuments of the wisdom and virtue for which his country has to thank him. Of Washington, indeed, if we behold in him a different character, one of a far more exalted description, there is this to be said, both that his imperishable fame rests rather upon the part he bore in the Revolution than on his administration of the Government which he helped to create ; and that his unequalled virtue and self-denial never could be practised in circumstances which, like those of Walpole, afforded no temptation to ambition, because they gave no means of usurping larger powers than the law bestowed : consequently his case cannot be compared, in any particular, with that of a prime minister under an established monarchical constitution. But Walpole held for many years the reins of government in England under two princes, neither of them born or bred in the country—held them during the troubles of a disputed succession, and held them while European politics were com-

plicated with various embarrassments; and yet he governed at home without any inroads upon public liberty; he administered the ordinary powers of the constitution without requiring the dangerous help of extreme temporary rigour; he preserved tranquillity at home without pressing upon the people; and he maintained peace abroad without any sacrifice either of the interests or the honour of the country. If no brilliant feats of improvement in our laws or in the condition of the state were attempted;—if no striking evolutions of external policy were executed;—at least all was kept safe and quiet in every quarter, and the irrepressible energies of national industry had the fullest scope afforded them during a lengthened season of repose, which in those days of “foreign war and domestic levy” was deemed a fortune hardly to be hoped for, and of which the history of the country had never offered any example.

Walpole was a man of an ancient, honourable, and affluent family, one of the first in the county of Norfolk, to whose possessions he succeeded while yet too young for entering into the Church, the profession he was destined to had an elder brother lived. Rescued from that humbler fortune (in which, however, he always said he would have risen to the Primacy), he had well-nigh fallen into one more obscure—the life of a country gentleman, in which he might have whiled away his time like

his ancestors, between the profession of a sportsman pursued with zeal, and that of a farmer always failing, because always more than half neglected by him who unites in his own person both landlord and tenant. The dangers of the Protestant succession at the close of King William's reign turned his attention to political matters upon his entrance into Parliament. The death of the Duke of Gloucester, Princess Anne's son, had alarmed both the illustrious prince on the throne and the Whig party in general; the Tories had thrown every obstacle in the way of the Act of Settlement, by which the King was anxiously endeavouring to confirm the freedom he had conquered for his adopted country; they had only introduced it in the hopes of its miscarrying; and the near balance of parties in Parliament, when the Abjuration Oath was carried by a majority of one (188 to 187), evinced too clearly that in the country the decided majority were for the exiled family. It is easy to conceive how greatly the having commenced his public life at such a crisis must have attracted him towards state affairs,* and how lasting an impression the momentous question that first engaged his attention must have produced upon his political sentiments in after-life. Soon after came the great

* He seconded the motion of Sir Charles Hedges for extending the oath to ecclesiastical persons. It was carried without a division.

question of privilege, the case of the Aylesbury men, arising out of the action of *Ashby v. White*; and here he, with the other leading Whigs—the Cowpers, the Kings, the Jekyls, the Cavendishes—took a decided part for the general law of the land, against the extravagant doctrines of privilege maintained by the Tories. Sacheverell's trial—a Whig folly, which he privately did all in his power to prevent—completed his devotion to political life: he was one of the managers, and was exposed to his share of the popular odium under which all the promoters of that ill-advised proceeding not unnaturally fell. The Church party were so powerful that the mob was on their side as well as the Queen's Court; and this incident in Whig history, described by Bolingbroke as “having a parson to roast, and burning their hands in the fire,” made Walpole dread that fire ever after; for it is not more certain that the share with which he in the Act of Settlement successfully commenced his public life, gave a strong Whig bias to his after-life, than it is certain that the Sacheverell case gave him a constitutional abhorrence of religious controversy, and an invincible repugnance to touch any question that could connect itself with Church or Sectarian clamour. Through his whole public life he betrayed a lurking dread of anything on which the religious sentiments of the community could be brought to bear, as if aware that these

being subjects on which men feel rather than reason, it is impossible to descry before-hand the course public opinion may take upon them, or fix bounds to the excitement they may produce. This, and not any indifference to the great cause of toleration, always kept him from seeking securities which there is every reason to think he would naturally have wished to obtain against the High Church party, and in favour of the Sectaries.

The sagacity of such men as Godolphin and Marlborough early descried Walpole's merit, which at once procured him their favour: with the latter, to whom he owed his first appointment of Secretary at War, his intercourse was always intimate and confidential. When a vile Court intrigue saved France from being undone by the victories of that great man; when what St. Simon calls the "*Miracle de Londres*" unexpectedly rescued Louis XIV. from his doom; when, as Frederick II. many years after said, Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenard, Malplaquet, were all unable to defend him against detraction, and the French King was lost had the intrigues of a mistress of the robes and a bedchamber-woman suffered the Great Captain to remain two years longer in power—Walpole threw up his place with the Duke, and nobly refused to join some shuffling place-seeking Whigs, who were talked over by Harley and St. John to remain under the Tories. This was an offence not to be

forgiven. His aggravation of it, by boldly defending the conduct of Marlborough against the slanderous attacks of the adverse faction, produced the charge against him of corruption while at the War-Office: and he was sent to the Tower upon an accusation of having received 900*l.* from a contractor; was expelled the House of Commons, though never either impeached or prosecuted; and, on being re-elected in the same Parliament, was declared ineligible by a majority of the House.

That Walpole, through the whole of this proceeding, was regarded as the victim of party rancour; that but for the factious spirit of the day he never would have been accused; that nothing can be less decisive against any one than a vote carried by a majority of twelve in a full House of Commons, in which many of the adverse party voted with the accused, and many more refused to vote at all; and that the greatest distrust of their case was shown by the accusers in never venturing to institute judicial proceedings of any kind—may all be easily admitted; and yet there rests a stain upon this part of Walpole's public conduct. For what was his defence? Not to deny that the contractors had given two notes, one of 500 guineas, and the other of as many pounds (of which all but 100 were paid), but to affirm that they were only paid through Walpole's hand to a friend named Mann, whom he had meant to favour by giving him a

share of the contract, and who had agreed to take so much for his proportion of the profit. Mann was dead ; the contractors had made the notes payable to Walpole in ignorance of Mann's name, and only knowing he was put upon them as a friend of the Minister ; and thus a case of fraud and suspicion appeared against the latter, which the unfortunate accident of the former's death prevented from being clearly removed. Now, that such a proceeding, admitting it to have been as Walpole himself describes it, would in our purer days have been deemed most incorrect, nay, sufficient to stain the character of any minister, cannot be doubted. In those days the course of office seems to have sanctioned such impropriety ; and that no man was ever injured by having so behaved, any more than the reputations of some French ministers seem to be the worse for the wear they undergo on the Stock Exchange, must be obvious from the fact of Walpole having, in four years after, been placed at the head of the Treasury, though without the place of Premier ; and afterwards become, and continued head of the Government for nearly the whole residue of his life, with no diminution of his influence or his estimation in consequence of the transaction at the War-Office, and with hardly any allusion ever made to that remarkable passage of his life, during the many years of the most factious opposition which his long administration encountered,

when, for want of the materials of attack, it was seriously urged against him that so long a tenure of power by one man was detrimental to the state, if not dangerous to the constitution. Nothing can more strikingly show the great improvement which the principles of public men and the practice of the constitution have undergone during the last hundred years.

When he quitted office, a charge of a different complexion, though connected with pecuniary malversation, was made against the veteran statesman. A sum of between 17,000*l.* and 18,000*l.* had been received by him upon two Treasury orders, two days before he resigned, in February, 1741-2; and to raise the money before the Exchequer forms could be gone through, they were pawned with the officer of the Bank. Now, Walpole never would give a detailed explanation of this transaction, but began to draw up a vindication of himself, alleging that the money was taken, with the King's approbation, for the public service. This paper is extant, but unfinished; and it consists of a clear and distinct statement of the course of the Exchequer in issuing money, from which the inference is, that no one can appropriate any sum to himself in defiance of, or escape from, so many guards and checks. This, however, is a lame defence, when the receipt of the money by him is admitted. The reason offered for his desisting

from the completion of the paper is, that he must either leave it incomplete, or betray the secret service of the Crown. And it may be admitted that, except the suspicion arising from the date of the transaction, there is nothing in it more than an ordinary dealing with secret service money.

The general charge of peculation grounded on the comparison of his expenditure with his means, appears more difficult to meet. With a fortune originally of about 2000*l.* a-year, and which never rose to more than double that amount, he lived with a profusion amounting to extravagance; in-somuch that one of his yearly meetings at Houghton, "the Congress" as it was called, in autumn, and which lasted six or eight weeks, and was attended by all his supporters in either House and by their friends, cost him 3000*l.* a-year. His buildings and purchases were estimated at 200,000*l.*, and to this must be added 40,000*l.* for pictures. Now, it is true that for many years he had his own official income of 3000*l.*, with 2000*l.* more of a sinecure, and his family had between 3000*l.* and 4000*l.* more, in places of the like description.* Still, if the expensive style of his living be considered, and that his income was at the very outside only 12,000*l.* clear, including the places of his sons, it is quite impossible to understand how above

* 2000*l.*, granted in reversion only, did not fall in till 1737.

200,000*l.*, or nearly twice the average value of his whole private property, could have been accumulated by savings. His incumbrances were only paid off by his wife's fortune; his gains upon the fortunate sale of his South-Sea stock, just before the fall, could hardly account for the sum, although he states, in a letter to one of his friends, that he got a thousand per cent. on what he purchased. On the whole, we must be content to admit that some cloud hangs over this part of his history; and that the generally prevailing attacks against him in this quarter have not been very successfully repulsed.

It has been much more universally believed, that he carried on the Government with a profuse application of the influence derived from patronage; and that the most open bribery entered largely into his plan of parliamentary management. That in those days the men were far less pure who filled the highest places in the State, and that parliamentary as well as ministerial virtue was pitched upon a lower scale than it happily has been, since a prying and fearless press and a watchful public scrutinized the conduct of all persons in any situation of trust, may be at once admitted. It is a truth which has been repeatedly asserted in these pages; and if any conclusive proof of it were required, it is the proof we have in the universally known fact, that the combinations of political party

now proceed so much more upon principle than upon personal connexions; or that when they are framed upon the latter, the pretext of principle is always used to cloak over arrangements which the improved character of the times will no longer suffer to meet the light. It may be further granted, that the period of Walpole's power was one likely to introduce extraordinary forces into the political system, since the stake was not always a ministry alone, but oftentimes also a crown. When such is the game, measures are readily resorted to, which, in the ordinary measures or matches of politicians, would be reluctantly if at all adopted. That it was usual in those days for men out of office who had voted with the Government during the session, and had obtained no promotion, nor any other favours, to receive sums of money—whether as a token of ministerial gratitude, or as a reimbursement of their expenses in attending parliament—has been so often asserted, and in some instances with such detailed particulars, that it seems to pass for one of the usual modes of House of Commons' management—pretty much like the shares (technically called *slices*) of loans distributed among persons in certain offices.* But we may safely

* Some notion of the free use made in those days of the current coin as a political agent, may be gathered from the fact which Shippen himself related to the celebrated Dr. Middleton. The Prince of Wales, to testify his satisfaction with a speech which the sturdy old Jacobite had made, sent

assert, that Sir Robert Walpole's reputation for having carried on the Government with unprecedented corruption rests on no better ground than his open and honest way of avowing the more accustomed exercise of patronage, and his reflections, rather merry than well considered, on the nature of political men—which gave rise to the notion, that he held statesmen as more venal than others had believed them to be. His famous saying, that "all men have their price," can prove nothing unless "price" be defined; and, if a large and liberal sense is given to the word, the proposition more resembles a truism than a sneer, or an ebullition of official misanthropy. But it has been positively affirmed that the remark never was made; for it is said that an important word is omitted, which wholly changes the sense; and that Walpole only said, in reference to certain factious or profligate adversaries, and their adherents resembling themselves, "*all these men* have their price."* His general tone of sarcasm, when speaking of patriotism and political gratitude,

him 1000*l.* by General Churchill, Groom of his Bedchamber, Shippen refused it. That Walpole himself had known of similar attempts made on Shippen's virtue by the Hanoverian party, is pretty evident from his well-known saying respecting that honest man—"I won't say who is corrupt, but who is not corruptible I will say, and that is Mr. Shippen."

* Coxe's Life of Walpole, vol. i. p. 757.

and others of the more fleeting virtues, is well known. "Patriots," he said, "are easily raised: I have myself made many a one. 'Tis but to refuse an unreasonable demand, and up springs a patriot." So the gratitude of political men he defined to be "a lively sense of favours to come." The opinion of mankind which such speeches as these imported made Pope say,—

"Would he oblige me? Let me only find

He does not think me what he thinks mankind."

But if it is certain that his low estimate of public virtue, always openly, perhaps too openly, expressed, tended to lower men's estimate of his own, by making them suppose that he was likely to act upon his notions of those he had to deal with, it is at least equally clear, that the question more fit to be asked before we condemn him of exaggerated misanthropy, is,—Whether or not he very greatly erred in the mean opinion of others which he had formed? No one who has been long the dispenser of patronage among large bodies of his fellow-citizens can fail to see infinitely more numerous instances of sordid, selfish, greedy, ungrateful conduct, than of the virtues to which such hateful qualities stand opposed. Daily examples come before him of the most unfeeling acrimony towards competitors,—the most far-fetched squeamish jealousy of all conflicting claims—unblushing falsehood in both its branches, boasting

and detraction—grasping selfishness in both kinds, greedy pursuit of men's own bread, and cold calculating upon others' blood—the fury of disappointment when that has not been done which it was impossible to do—swift oblivion of all that has been granted—unreasonable expectation of more, only because much has been given—not seldom favours repaid with hatred and ill treatment, as if by this unnatural course the account might be settled between gratitude and pride—such are the secrets of the human heart which power soon discloses to its possessor: add to these, that which, however, deceives no one—the never-ceasing hypocrisy of declaring, that whatever is most eagerly sought is only coveted as affording the means of serving the country, and will only be taken at the sacrifice of individual interest to the sense of public duty; and I desire to be understood here as speaking from my own official experience. It is not believed that in our own times men are at all worse than they were a century ago. Why then should we suppose that one who had been Prime Minister for twenty years, and in office five or six more, had arrived at his notion of human nature from a misanthropical disposition rather than from his personal experience, a longer one than I possessed?

But still more unjust is the inference which is drawn even from a supposition of exaggerated misanthropy, that because he thought less favour-

ably of men that they deserved—therefore he had ministered to their corruptions, and availed himself of their frailties. A far more rigorous test was applied to his conduct than any other minister's ever underwent. His whole proceedings were unsparingly attacked towards the close of his reign, by a motion personally directed against him, supported with the most acrimonious zeal, and preceded by the minutest inquiry into all his weak points. In the House, when he was present to meet the charge of corruption, none was made; after he had ceased to rule, and had left the Commons, a committee sat for weeks to investigate his conduct. The result of the inquiry was the charge already adverted to; and a futile statement of his having offered a place to the mayor of a borough, and a living to that magistrate's brother, in order to influence an election. In the great debate on Sandys's motion, a proud testimony to his pure administration of one most important branch of the public service was borne by Sir C. Wager, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who declared that, during the nine years in which he had presided over the Navy, Sir Robert had never once recommended any one for promotion; adding, that had he done so, he, the Admiral, would have thrown up his employments. It may well be doubted if all the successors, either at the Treasury or the Admiralty, have been equally pure in their high offices. Undue inter-

ference with men's parliamentary conduct, by removing those who had voted against him, was of course charged upon him and hardly denied; but it is a proceeding for which ministers are as often praised as blamed; it is accounted the use of legitimate influence to support the government. He loudly denied that ever a threat had been employed by him to deter men from voting according to their conscientious opinions; and when all were challenged to convict him of such a course, none offered to accuse.

Having cleared away the ground from the entanglements with which contemporary prejudices and interests had encumbered it, we may now the more distinctly perceive the merits of this great statesman; and we shall easily admit that he was one of the ablest, wisest, safest rulers who ever bore sway in this country. Inferior to many in qualities that dazzle the multitude, and undervaluing the mere outward accomplishments of English statesmanship, nay, accounting them merits only so far as they conduced to parliamentary and to popular influence—and even much undervaluing their effects in that direction—Walpole yet ranks in the very highest class of those whose unvarying prudence, clear apprehension, fertility of resources to meet unexpected difficulties, firmness of purpose, just and not seemingly exaggerated self-confidence, point them out by common consent as the men qualified

to guide the course of human affairs, to ward off public dangers, and to watch over the peace of empires.* His knowledge was sound and practical ; it was, like all his other qualities, for use and not for ornament ; yet he lacked nothing of the information which in his day formed the provision of the politician. With men his acquaintance was extensive, and it was profound. His severe judgments, the somewhat misanthropic bias to which reference has been made, never misled him ; it only put him on his guard ; and it may safely be affirmed that no man ever made fewer mistakes in his intercourse with either adversaries, or friends, or the indifferent world.

From these great qualities it resulted, that a better or a more successful minister could not preside over any country in times of peace ; and, if we are unable to conjecture how far his sagacity, his boldness, his prudent circumspection, his quickness of apprehension, would have sufficed to make him as great a war minister, we have to thank his wise and virtuous policy, which steadfast in desiring peace, and his matchless skill, which, in the most difficult circumstances, happily securing the execution of his grand purpose, have left us only

* It is gratifying to me that I can conscientiously rank Lord Melbourne among those to whom this description applies in most of its essential points. His faults belong to others ; his merits are his own.

to conjecture what the last of national calamities could alone have proved. Nor had he ordinary circumstances to contend against, or ordinary men, in the undeviating pursuit of peace, which made his course so truly useful and so really brilliant. The impatience of France to recover her power and her military reputation, dimmed by the wars of William and of Anne; the Spanish politics, complicated beyond their usual degree of entanglement; Austria, alternately exposed to danger of being conquered, and putting the balance of Europe to hazard by her ambition and her intrigues, never perhaps active or formidable at any other period of her history; Prussia, rising into powerful influence, and menacing Germany with conquest; the great capacity of the Regent Orleans, his inexhaustible resources of address, his manly courage, his profligate character; the habitual insincerity and deep cunning of Fleury, whose pacific disposition, nevertheless, made him Walpole's natural ally—such were the difficulties and the adversaries among which he had to steer the vessel committed to his care; while he had to thwart his councils at home, the King, first the father and then the son, constantly bent upon projects of ambition, reckoning conquest the only occupation worthy of princes, war their natural element, and peace an atmosphere in which they can scarcely

breathe. It may be added to this, and it forms a higher eulogy still on this great statesman, that beside the opposition to his wise and virtuous policy which he encountered among courtiers and colleagues, often misled by the public impatience, not seldom taking their tone from the Sovereign, an opposition even broke out publicly in high and unexpected quarters; for the Chancellor himself, on one occasion, made a warlike harangue on quitting the woolsack to address the Lords.* A constant feeling of national pride and national prejudice was operating against France, in hatred or jealousy of French alliance, in dislike even of peace itself. The deep-rooted prejudices of the English people never set in more strongly against their French neighbours than during Walpole's administration. One-half the country, albeit friends of the Pretender, hated them because they were French; the other half, both because they were French, and because they were adverse to the Hanoverian settlement. The soreness felt ever since the interests of the country and all the fruits of her most glorious actions had been sacrificed

* When Lord Hardwicke, carried away by the national enthusiasm beyond his accustomed moderation and even gentleness of speech, was declaiming with vehemence on the Spanish depredations in 1739, Walpole, standing on the throne, said to those near him, "Bravo, Colonel Yorke! bravo!"

at Utrecht, continued to gall the nation, and make it desirous of regaining by arms the footing which politics had lost; and during the long administration of Walpole there hardly passed a year in which the public eye was not jealously pointed to some quarter of the world, remote or near, as offering a reason why the public voice should be raised for war. It was this general tide of public opinion, as well as the under current of royal and courtly inclination, that Walpole had to stem for many a long year. He did stem it; gallantly he kept the vessel to her course; and he was not driven from the helm by the combined clamours of the mob and intrigues of party, until after he had secured the incalculable blessing of a repose without example for all the great interests committed to his charge.

If after so long a struggle he at length gave way, it must be remembered that the whole country was with the King, and the Court determined upon the Spanish war—one of the greatest blots in English history. Walpole's opposition to it was strenuous, and it was unavailing. He tendered his resignation to the King, and the King refused to accept it, passionately asking his minister "Whether he would desert him at his greatest need?" He then laid his commands on him to remain, and unluckily for his reputation Walpole obeyed. Had he persisted in resigning, he might

not have been able to prevent the catastrophe, but he would have saved himself from the reproach of superintending councils which he no longer directed; he would have been spared four years of continued mortifications; and his name would have remained to all posterity without a single blot to chequer its lustre.

That he had at all times, in the conduct of foreign affairs, fearlessly counselled the Crown, and without the least regard to personal feelings spoken out like a man the whole truth in the closet, where such sounds so seldom are echoed from the walls, no doubt whatever exists.

Early in George I.'s reign he resisted vigorously his pressing desire for measures against Prussia, on account of a Mecklenburg quarrel, in which the Elector of Hanover took a very vehement part: he absolutely refused him money too, and was reproached by the King for breach of his promise. His answer was, though respectful, yet firm, and it was sincere. He would not dispute, he said, the assertion of his Majesty; but if he had ever made such a promise, he was wholly unable to recollect it. To the rapacity of the German favourites he offered so firm a resistance that he was the abhorrence and detestation of them all, both men and women. When George was, five years after, bent upon opposing the Czar's attempts in favour of the Duke of Holstein's

views upon the Swedish throne, Walpole plainly and firmly explained his views, refused the sum demanded, and so impressed the King with the wisdom of his pacific policy, that he joined him against all his other ministers, both English and German.—With George II. he held the same honest, independent course; insomuch that at one time the King's displeasure rose to the height of making it impossible for Queen Caroline, his steady supporter, to defend, or even name him in her husband's presence. Her only means of assuaging the Royal anger was to ascribe the minister's peaceful, or, as the King termed it, unworthy and feeble policy, to his brother Horace's influence over his mind on all foreign matters. His remonstrance against "the petty Germanic schemes" of that prince were unremitting; and once he had the courage to tell him how much "the welfare of his own dominions and the happiness of Europe depended on his being a great king rather than a considerable elector!" If such a speech was likely to be little palatable to his Electoral Highness, still less pleasing must have been the remark which the same honest minister ventured to make on one of the many occasions when the implacable hatred of the House of Brunswick towards that of Brandenburg broke out. "Will your Majesty engage in an enterprise which must prove both disgraceful and disadvantageous? Why, Hanover

will be no more than a breakfast to the Prussian army.”*

In commemorating the inestimable service which Walpole's pacific policy rendered to his country and the world, strict justice required us to enumerate the obstacles which were offered to his wise and honest course. The other great service which he rendered to his country, was the securing of the Protestant succession ;—invaluable, not merely as excluding the plague of the Romish hierarchy and Romish superstition, but as perpetuating the settlement of the Revolution, by which the right of the people to discard their rulers, and to choose such as will protect, not destroy, their liberties, was recognised and acted upon. Then Walpole had to struggle, not only against the intrigues of the exiled family, sometimes openly, always secretly, favoured by France, but against a majority of the landed interest in England, perhaps in Scotland, certainly in Ireland—a majority in

* The only serious objection ever urged against Sir Robert's foreign policy, his suffering the Emperor (Charles VI.) to encounter much hazard from Spain and France rather than actively aid him in his measures, and thus raising France at Austria's expense, has long since faded from the memory of all reflecting men, as a wholly groundless charge. In fact, although Charles was so incensed at our conduct respecting the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, as at times to be in a state of mental derangement, it is certain that by no other course could war with France, and a general war in Europe, have been avoided.

number as well as in value of the whole people. The accession of George I. had added to the weight of the Stuart faction all those whom that prince excluded from his favour, by the policy which he from the first pursued of placing himself at the head of a party. The appearance among us of a foreigner to exercise all the functions of royalty, cooled the loyalty of some natural friends, while it converted many indifferent persons into enemies. Above all, the inroad of a foreign court, foreign mistresses, foreign favourites, all insatiable of English gold as soon as they reached the land of promise, created a degree of discontent, and even of disgust, which mightily increased the prevailing tendency to regret the sway of a native family. In this state of things did Walpole prove himself a match for the extreme difficulties of his position. Through his universal and accurate intelligence, he was constantly aware of every design that was plotting in every corner of Europe, from Stockholm to Naples, by the restless intrigues of the exiled family—aware of them long before they had time for ripening into mischief—aware of them, generally speaking, from the very first movement in any of their most secret councils. There was not, too, a family in the British dominions whose leanings he was not acquainted with, and whose relations, if they had any, with the Pretender, he did not know. This knowledge he

used without ever abusing it: he acted upon it for the safety of the State, without ever once bringing it to bear against the parties, or deriving from it the means of injuring, or of annoying, or of humbling his adversaries. The fact is well known, that he was possessed of proofs which would have ruined more than one of them. Shippen, among others, knew he was in his antagonist's power; but that antagonist never prevented him from honestly pursuing the course of his violent and indeed very factious opposition. It must be further observed, in honour of Walpole's wisdom and firmness, that when the Protestant succession was endangered by foreign movements on the part of the Pretender, his all but invincible repugnance to warlike measures gave way to a provident spirit of wary precaution; and he at once, both in his foreign negotiations with Holland and Germany, and in his vigorous preparations for war with France, showed his resolute determination to defend at all hazards the Revolution settlement, and to punish those who would molest it.

The financial administration of Walpole has been deservedly commended by all but the zealots of a faction. Every one has admitted the great improvements which he introduced into that department. A single measure by which he repealed above a hundred export duties, and nearly forty on imported articles, was only part of his system; which

was clearly before his age, and therefore exposed him to the usual clamour raised against original thinkers on state affairs. He held that raw commodities for manufactures, and articles of necessity for consumption, should be relieved from all taxes ; that the impost upon land should be reduced as far as possible ; that the revenue collected from the customs, being liable to evasions by contraband trade, should be transferred to the excise ; and that articles of luxury should thus be more securely and economically made to bear the burdens of the public expenditure. Every one knows the clamour which the great measure of the excise, the principal illustration of his doctrine, encountered. His reason for relinquishing it is not discreditable to him. He had carried it by majorities always decreasing ; and, when finally the majority was under twenty, he gave it up on ascertaining that the people were so generally set against it that the aid of troops would be required to collect it. “ No revenue,” said this constitutional minister, “ ought to be levied in this free country that it requires the sabre and the bayonet to collect.” A learned and eminently narrow-minded man, hating Walpole for his Revolution principles, has not scrupled to record his own factious folly in the definition of *Excise* given in his dictionary. Another, a greater, a more factious, and a less honest man, helped, and much less impotently helped, to clamour down the

only other part of Walpole's domestic administration which has ever been made the subject of open attack ; though doubtless the extinction of Jacobitism was the real, but hidden, object of all these invectives ;—I mean Dean Swift, whose promotion in the church he had prevented, upon discovering the most glaring acts of base perfidy on the part of that unprincipled wit ; and whose revenge was taken against the provision made, rather by Walpole's predecessors than himself, for supplying a copper coinage to Ireland, upon terms to the trader perfectly fair, and to the country sufficiently advantageous. The '*Drapier's Letters*,' one of his most famous and by far his most popular production, the act of his life, he was accustomed to confess, upon which rested his whole Irish popularity—and no name ever retained its estimation in the mind of the Irish people nearly so long—urged his countrymen to reject these halfpence ; it being, the very reverend author solemnly asserted, "their first duty to God next to the salvation of their souls ;" and he asserted, impudently asserted, that the coin was only worth a twelfth of its nominal value. Impudently, I repeat, and why ?—Because a careful assay was immediately made at the English mint, by the Master of the Mint, and the result was to ascertain, that the standard weight was justly proved. And who was that Master ? None other than Sir Isaac Newton. The calumnies and

the ribaldry of the Dean prevailed over the experiments of the illustrious philosopher, and the coinage was withdrawn from circulation.*

The private character of Walpole is familiarly known; and all contemporary writers join in giving the same impression of it. Open, honest, unaffected, abounding in kindness, overflowing with good-humour, generous to profusion, hospitable to a fault, in his manners easy to excess—no wonder that the ruler of the country should have won all hearts by qualities which would have made a private gentleman the darling of society. With these merits, however, were joined defects or weaknesses, which broke in somewhat upon the respect that severe judges require a great statesman to be compassed with round about. His mirth was somewhat free, and apt to be coarse; and he patronised boisterous hilarity in the society which he frequented, and at the merry meetings which were the relaxation of his life. He regarded not the decorum which sober habits sustain; and he followed, in respect of convivial enjoyments, rather the fashion of his own day than of ours. He indulged, too, in gallantry more than beseemed either his station or his years; and he had, like a

* An Irish writer of incoherent mathematical papers in our own day attacks Sir Isaac Newton as a "Saxon," and a "driveller;" and he is not treated in Ireland with universal scorn.

celebrated contemporary* of his, the weakness of affecting to be less strictly virtuous in this respect than he was, and considerably more successful in his pursuit of such recreations. This mixture of honest openness and scorn of hypocrisy, with some little tendency to boast of fortune's favours, made the only trait like an exception to the wholly plain and unaffected nature of the man. Nor is it easy to define with accuracy how much was affectation, and how much ought to be set down to the account of a merely joyous and frank temper. The delight which all persons, of whatever age or cast, took in his society, is admitted by every witness.

Of Sir Robert Walpole's character as an orator, or rather a great master of debate, it is of course at this distance of time, and with so little help from the parliamentary history of the day, not easy to speak with confidence or discrimination; because we must rely on the estimate formed by others, and handed down to us, with few indeed of the materials on which their judgment rested. That he despised not only all affectation and all refinements, but all the resources of the oratorical art beyond its great "origin and fountain," strong

* Louis XIV., when some one was recounting his nephew the Duc d'Orléans's (afterwards Regent's) foibles and vices, said, in language much eulogized by St. Simon, who relates the anecdote,—"*Encore est-il fanfaron de vices qu'il n'a point.*"

sense, clear ideas, anxious devotion to the object in view, carrying the audience along with the speaker, may well be supposed from the manly and plain, the homely and somewhat coarse, character of his understanding. Eminently a man of business, he came down to Parliament to do the business of the country, and he did it. He excelled in lucid statement, whether of an argument or of facts; he met his antagonist fearlessly, and went through every part of the question; he was abundantly ready at reply and at retort; he constantly preserved his temper, was even well-natured and gay in the midst of all his difficulties; and possessed his constitutional good-humour, with his unvaried presence of mind, in the thickest fire of the debate, be it ever so vehement, ever so personal, as entirely as if he were in his office, or his study, or the common circle of his friends. He was, too, a lively, and not ever a tiresome, speaker; nor did any man, hardly Lord North himself, enjoy the position—to any debater very enviable, to a minister the most enviable of all—that of a constant favourite with the House which it was his vocation to lead. Such is the general account left us of his speaking, and on this all witnesses are agreed.

It may be added, that his style was homely, for the most part; and his manner, though animated and lively, yet by no means affecting dignity. In

figures of speech he but rarely indulged, though his language seems to have been often distinguished by point. His personal retorts, though hardly ever offensive, were often distinguished by much force of invective and considerable felicity of sarcasm. His description of the factious and motley opposition, moved by the dark intrigues of Bolingbroke, and his portrait of that wily and subtle adversary, appears to have been a passage of great merit, as far as the conception went; for of the execution we cannot in fairness permit ourselves to judge from the only record of it which is preserved, the meagre parliamentary remains of those days. The excellence of this celebrated speech, which eventually drove Bolingbroke abroad, is greatly enhanced by the important circumstance of its being an unpremeditated reply to a very elaborate attack upon himself, in which Sir William Windham had feigned a case applicable to Walpole's, and under that cover drawn a severe portrait of him.

Notwithstanding the general plainness and simplicity of his style, some speeches remain distinguished by a highly ornamental and even figurative manner; that, for example, in opposition to the Peerage Bill, in which he spoke of the antients having erected the temple of honour behind the temple of virtue, to show by what avenues it must be approached; whereas we were called

upon to provide that its only avenue should be an obscure family pedigree, or the winding-sheet of some worthless ancestor. Some idea of his more animated and successful efforts may be formed, and it is a very high one, from the admirable exordium of his speech in reply to the long series of attacks upon him which Sandys's motion for his removal, in 1741, introduced. There remain of this speech only his own minutes, yet even from these its great merits appear clear. "Whatever is the conduct of England, I am equally arraigned. If we maintain ourselves in peace, and seek no share in foreign transactions, we are reproached with tameness and pusillanimity. If we interfere in disputes, we are called Don Quixotes and dupes to all the world. If we contract (give) guarantees, it is asked why the nation is wantonly burdened. If guarantees are declined, we are reproached with having no allies."

In general, his manner was simple, and even familiar, with a constant tendency towards gaiety. But of this his finest speech it is recorded, that the delivery was most fascinating, and of a dignity rarely surpassed. In vehemence of declamation he seldom indulged, and anything very violent was foreign to his habits at all times. Yet sometimes he deviated from this course; and once spoke under such excitement (on the motion respecting

Lord Cadogan's conduct, 1717) that the blood burst from his nose, and he had to quit the House. But for this accidental relief, he probably would have afforded a singular instance of a speaker, always good-humoured and easy in his delivery beyond almost any other, dropping down dead in his declamation, from excess of vehemence: and at this time he was between forty and fifty years of age.

But before proceeding to Walpole's great adversary, Bolingbroke, here I may pause to state why so large, as it may appear so disproportioned, a space has been allotted to Walpole, the centre figure in this group. It is because there is nothing more wholesome, for both the people and their rulers, than to dwell upon the excellence of those statesmen whose lives have been spent in furthering the useful, the sacred work of peace. The thoughtless vulgar are ever prone to magnify the brilliant exploits of arms, which dazzle ordinary minds, and prevent any account being taken of the cost and the crime that so often are hid in the covering of success. All merit of that shining kind is sure of passing current for more than it is really worth; and the eye is turned indifferently, and even scornfully, upon the unpretending virtue of the true friend to his species, the minister who devotes all his cares to stay the worst of crimes that can be committed, the last of calamities that

can be endured, by man. To hold up such men as Walpole in the face of the world as the model of a wise, a safe, an honest ruler, becomes the most sacred duty of the impartial historian ; and, as has been said of Cicero and of eloquence by a great critic, that statesman may feel assured that he has made progress in the science to which his life is devoted, who shall heartily admire the public character of Walpole.

LORD BOLINGBROKE.

FEW men, whose public life was so short, have filled a greater space in the eyes of the world during his own times than Lord Bolingbroke, or left behind them a more brilliant reputation. Not more than fifteen years elapsed between his first coming into Parliament and his attainder; during not more than ten of these years was he brought forward in the course of its proceedings; and yet as a statesman and an orator his name ranks among the most famous in our history, independently of the brilliant literary reputation which places him among the first classics of what we generally call our Augustan age. Much of his rhetorical fame may certainly be ascribed to the merit of his written works; but had he never composed a page, he would still have come down to our times as one of the most able and eloquent men of whom this country ever could boast. As it is upon his eloquence that his great reputation now rests, as upon that mainly was built his political influence, and as upon it alone any commendation of his political character must pro-

ceed, we shall do well to begin by examining the foundation before we look at the superstructure.

And here the defect, so often to be deplored in contemplating the history of modern oratory, attains its very height. Meagre as are the materials by which we can aim at forming to ourselves some idea of the eloquence of most men who flourished before our own day; scanty as are the remains even of the speakers who figured during the Seven Years' War, and the earlier part of the American contest; when we go back to the administration of Walpole, we find those vestiges to be yet more thinly scattered over the pages of our history; and in Queen Anne's time, during which alone Bolingbroke spoke, there are absolutely none. It is correct to affirm that of this great orator—one of the very greatest, according to all contemporary history, that ever exercised the art,—and these accounts are powerfully supported by his writings—not a spoken sentence remains, any more than of the speeches of Demades,* one of the most eloquent of the Greeks, any more than of Cicero's translation from Demosthenes, or the lost works of Livy and of Tacitus. The contemplation of this chasm it was that made Mr. Pitt, when musing upon its brink, and calling to mind all that might

* The fragment given in some *codices* as his appears of more than doubtful authenticity. The finest portion is taken from a very well-known passage in Demosthenes.

be fancied of the orator from the author, and all that traditional testimony had handed down to us, sigh after a "speech of Bolingbroke,"—desiderating it far more than the restoration of all that has perished of the treasures of the ancient world.

But, although we may well join in these un-availing regrets, attempt vainly to supply the want by our conjectures, and confess our ignorance of the peculiar character of his oratory, the fact of its mighty power is involved in no doubt at all. The concurring testimony of all parties leaves this a matter absolutely certain. The friends and supporters of Walpole, to whom his whole life was hostile, all his acts, his speeches, and his writings, are here agreed with the friends, the associates of Bolingbroke; and no diversity of shade marks the pictures which have come down to us from the hand of the antagonist and of the panegyrist. His most intimate companion, Dean Swift, may' be suspected of partiality when he represents him as "having in his hands half the business of the nation, and the applause of the whole;" but when he tells us that "understanding men of both parties asserted he had never been equalled in speaking," and that he had "an invincible eloquence, with a most agreeable elocution," we can find no fault with the exaggeration, for this account falls short of what others have told. In truth, his impression upon the men of his own age may well be con-

ceived to have been prodigious, when we reflect that hardly any English orator can now be cited as having flourished before his time. This circumstance might even detract from the weight of contemporary testimony in his favour, if we had not more specific reasons for believing implicitly in it than the mere concurrence of general reputation.

He had received at Eton a complete classical education; rather, let us say, had laid there the foundation of one, which, like all others who have shone as scholars, he afterwards completed. But his attention was more bestowed upon the remains of Rome than of Athens; he was extensively and thoroughly acquainted with Latin writers, as indeed his frequent quotation of passages little known may show. With Greek literature he seems not to have been familiar; nor can the reader of his own works fail to perceive that his style is not so redolent of the flowers which grew in the more rigorous climate of the Attic school. With the authors of the age immediately preceding his own—the true Augustan age of English letters—he was well acquainted; and, although his style is quite his own, none being more original, it is impossible to doubt that he had much studied and much admired (as who can stint himself in admiring?) the matchless prose of Dryden—rich, various, natural, animated, pointed, lending itself to the logical and the narrative, as well as the

pathetic and the picturesque, never baulking, never cloying, never wearying. To the literature of ancient and modern times he added a consummate knowledge of their history, and indeed appears of this to have made his principal study; for of natural science he was no professor, and his metaphysical writings have gained but little fame. Yet, that he was a profound moralist, had thoroughly studied the sources of human action, was well acquainted with the nature and habits of the mind, and had an understanding adapted by its natural acuteness to take part in the most subtle discussions, as well as habituated to them by study, it would be absurd to doubt, merely because his metaphysical speculations have been unsuccessful, as it would be the height of unworthy prejudice to deny it, merely because his opinions are tinged with scepticism, and because an unhappy veil of infidelity darkened his life, while it shrouded his posthumous works. They who look down upon even the purely ethical and purely metaphysical writings of Bolingbroke would do well to show us any statesman or any orator, except perhaps Cicero, who in any age has brought to the senate the same resources of moral science which even the failures of Bolingbroke as a professed author on these subjects prove him to have possessed; and it is hardly necessary to remark how vast an accession of force to his eloquence, whether in its argument-

ative, its pathetic, or its declamatory department, would have been gained by even far less skill, capacity, or practice, than he had as a moral philosopher, a student of the nature of the mind, or an expert logician.

Accordingly, when all these accomplishments, joined to his strong natural sagacity, his penetrating acuteness, his extraordinary quickness of apprehension, a clearness of understanding against which sophistry set itself up in vain, as the difficulties of the most complicated subject in vain opposed his industry and his courage; with a fancy rich, lively, various beyond that of most men, a wit exuberant and sparkling, a vehemence of passion belonging to his whole temperament, even to his physical powers—came to be displayed before the assembly which he was to address; and when the mighty "*Armamentaria Cæli*" were found under the command of one whose rich endowments of mind, and whose ample stores of acquired virtue, resided in a person of singular grace, animated a countenance at once beautiful and expressive, and made themselves heard in the strains of an unrivalled voice, it is easy to comprehend how vast, how irresistible must have been their impression. That is easy; but unhappily all we can now obtain is the apprehension that it must have been prodigious, without being able ourselves to penetrate the veil that hides it, or to form any very distinct

notion of its peculiar kind. For the purpose of approximating to this knowledge, it is necessary that we should now consider the style of his written discourse; because, although in general the difference is great between the same man's writings and his oratory (witness the memorable example of Mr. Fox, who, however, increased the diversity by writing on a system, and a bad one)—yet in some this difference is much less than in others, and there seems abundant reason to believe that in Bolingbroke's case it was as inconsiderable as in any other.

If we inquire on what models Bolingbroke formed his style, the result will be, as in the case of all other great and original writers, that he was rather imbued with the general taste and relish of former authors than imitated any of them. That he had filled his mind with the mighty exemplars of antiquity is certain—for, though of Greek he had small store, with the Latin classics he was familiar, and habitually so, as his allusions and his quotations constantly show. As might be supposed in one of his strong sense, knowledge of man and of men, as well as free habits, Horace seems to have been his favourite; but the historians also are plainly of his intimate society. Among modern authors he appears to have had Dryden's prose, and the admirable composition of Shaftesbury, most in his mind. The resemblance of manner

may indeed be frequently found with these excellent models—of whom the former, with Bolingbroke himself, may perhaps be admitted to stand at the head of all our great masters of diction. But though in vigour, in freedom, occasionally in rhythm also, in variety that never palls nor ever distracts from the subject, in copiousness that speaks an exhaustless fountain for its source, nothing can surpass Dryden ; yet must it be confessed that Bolingbroke is more terse, more condensed where closeness is required, more epigrammatic, and of the highest order of epigram, which has its point not in the words but the thoughts ; and when, even in the thoughts, it is so subdued as to be minister of the composer, and not his master—helping the explication, or the argument, or the invective, without appearing to be the main purpose of the composition.* In another and a material respect he also greatly excels Dryden ; there is nothing flowery in any part of his writings ; he always respects his reader, his subject, and himself, too much to throw out matter in a crude and half-finished form, at least as far as diction is concerned : for the structure of his works is anything rather than finished and systematic. Even his tract ‘ On Parties,’ which he calls a *Dissertation*, though certainly his most elaborate work, perhaps also the most admirably written, has as little of an orderly methodical exposition of principles, or statement

of reasonings, as can well be imagined. It is a series of letters addressed to a political paper, abounding in acute, sagacious, often profound reflections, with forcible arguments, much happy illustration, constant references to history, many attacks upon existing parties; but nothing can be less like what we commonly term a Dissertation. The same remark applies to almost all his writings. He is clear, strong, copious; he is never methodical; the subject is attacked in various ways; it is taken up by the first end that presents itself, and it is handled skilfully, earnestly, and strikingly, in many of its parts; it cannot be said to be thoroughly gone through, though it be powerfully gone into; in short, it is discussed as if a speaker of great power, rather than a writer, were engaged upon it; and accordingly nothing can be more clear than that Bolingbroke's works convey to us the idea of a prodigious orator rather than of a very great and regular writer. When Mr. Burke asked, "Who now reads Bolingbroke?" he paved the way for another equally natural exclamation, "What would we not give to hear him?" and this was Mr. Pitt's opinion, when, as has already been observed, the question being raised in conversation about the *desiderata* most to be lamented, and one said the lost books of Livy, another those of Tacitus, a third a Latin tragedy—he at once declared for "A Speech of Bolingbroke." Nor is it the

method—rather the want of method—the easy and natural order in which the topics follow one another, not taken up on a plan, but each, as it were, growing out of its immediate predecessor, that makes his writings so closely resemble spoken compositions. The diction is most eminently that of oratorical works. It is bold, rapid, animated, natural, and racy, yet pointed and correct, bearing the closest scrutiny of the critic, when submitted to the eye in the hour of calm judgment ; but admirably calculated to fill the ear, and carry away the feelings in the moment of excitement. If Bolingbroke spoke as he wrote, he must have been the greatest of modern orators, as far as composition goes ; for he has the raciness and spirit, occasionally even the fire, perhaps not the vehemence of Fox, with richer imagery, and far more correct diction ; the accurate composition of Pitt, with infinitely more grace and variety ; the copiousness, almost the learning, and occasionally the depth of Burke, without his wearily elaborate air ; for his speech never degenerates for an instant into dissertation, which Burke's scarcely ever avoids.

To characterise his manner of speaking from his writings would be difficult and tedious, if possible. There are in these, however, passages which plainly bear the impress of his extraordinary oratorical powers, and which, if spoken, must have produced

an indescribable effect. Take a noble passage from the '*Dissertation on Parties*.'

“ If King Charles had found the nation plunged in corruption; the people choosing their representatives for money, without any other regard; and these representatives of the people, as well as the nobility, reduced by luxury to beg the unhallowed alms of a court, or to receive, like miserable hirelings, the wages of iniquity from a minister; if he had found the nation, I say, in this condition (which extravagant supposition one cannot make without horror), he might have dishonoured her abroad, and impoverished and oppressed her at home, though he had been the weakest prince on earth, and his ministers the most odious and contemptible men that ever presumed to be ambitious. Our fathers might have fallen into circumstances which compose the quintessence of political misery. They might have sold their birthright for porridge, which was their own. They might have been bubbled by the foolish, bullied by the fearful, and insulted by those whom they despised. They would have deserved to be slaves, and they might have been treated as such. When a free people crouch, like camels, to be loaded, the next at hand, no matter who, mounts them, and they soon feel the whip and the spur of their tyrant, whether prince or minister, who resembles the devil in many respects; particularly

in this—he is often both the tempter and the tormentor. He makes the criminal, and he punishes the crime.”

Another fine passage, admirably fitted for spoken eloquence by its rapidity, its point, its fulness of matter, each *hit* rising above the last, may be taken from the celebrated Dedication to Sir Robert Walpole :—

“Should a minister govern, in various instances of domestic and foreign management, ignorantly, weakly, or even wickedly, and yet pay this reverence and bear this regard to the constitution, he would deserve certainly much better quarter, and would meet with it too from every man of sense and honour, than a minister who should conduct the administration with great ability and success, and should at the same time procure and abet, or even connive at, such indirect violations of the rules of the constitution as tend to the destruction of it, or even at such evasions as tend to render it useless. A minister who had the ill qualities of both these, and the good ones of neither ; who made his administration hateful in some respects, and despicable in others ; who sought that security by ruining the constitution, which he had forfeited by dishonouring the government ; who encouraged the profligate and seduced the unwary to concur with him in this design, by affecting to explode all public spirit, and to ridicule every form of our con-

stitution ; such a minister would be looked upon most justly as the shame and scourge of his country ; sooner or later he would fall without pity, and it is hard to say what punishment would be proportionable to his crimes."

Lastly, take this instance of another kind, but alike fitted for the senate :—

"The flowers they gather at Billingsgate to adorn and entwine their productions shall be passed over by me without any explication. They assume the privilege of watermen and oysterwomen : let them enjoy it in that good company, and exclusively of all other persons. They cause no scandal ; they give no offence ; they raise no sentiment but contempt in the breasts of those they attack : and it is to be hoped, for the honour of those whom they would be thought to defend, that they raise, by their low and dirty practice, no other sentiment in them. But there is another part of their proceedings which may be attributed by malicious people to you, and which deserves, for that reason alone, some place in this Dedication, as it might be some motive to the writing of it. When such authors grow scurrilous, it would be highly unjust to impute their scurrility to any prompter, because they have in themselves all that is necessary to constitute a scold—ill-manners, impudence, a foul mouth, and a fouler heart. But when they menace, they rise a note higher. They cannot do this in

their own names. Men may be apt to conclude, therefore, that they do it in the name, as they affect to do it on the behalf, of the person in whose cause they desire to be thought retained."

The gracefulness of Bolingbroke's manner has been so greatly extolled by his contemporaries, that we can hardly believe his eloquence to have risen into the vehemence ascribed to it by one who had studied his works more than other men, for he had written an excellent imitation of his style. Mr. Burke speaks of that rapid torrent of "an impetuous and overbearing eloquence for which he is justly admired," as well as "the rich variety of his imagery."* There is assuredly nothing in his style to discountenance this notion; and, as Burke lived much nearer Bolingbroke's times than we do, there can be little doubt that his panegyric is correct. But all accounts agree in describing the external qualities (so to speak) of his oratory as perfect. A symmetrically beautiful and animated countenance, a noble and dignified person, a sonorous and flexible voice, action graceful and correct, though unstudied, gave his delivery an inexpressible charm with those who witnessed his extraordinary displays as spectators or critics; and armed his eloquence with resistless effect over those whom it was intended to sway, or persuade, or control. If the concurring accounts of witnesses, and the testimony to his merits borne by his writings, may be

* Preface to the Vindication of Natural Society (*sub fine*).

trusted, he must be pronounced to stand, upon the whole, at the head of modern orators. There may have been more measure and matured power in Pitt, more fire in the occasional bursts of Chatham, more unbridled vehemence, more intent reasoning in Fox, more deep-toned declamation in passages of Sheridan, more learned imagery in Burke, more wit and humour in Canning ;* but, as a whole, and taking in all rhetorical gifts, and all the orator's accomplishments, no one, perhaps hardly the union of several of them, can match what we are taught by tradition to admire in Bolingbroke's spoken eloquence, and what the study of his works makes us easily believe to be true.

In considering Bolingbroke's character, there is even less possibility than in ordinary cases of separating the politic from the natural capacity : less pretence for making the distinction, so often and

* It is inconsistent with the plan of this work to treat of living speakers ; and this imposes a restraint in illustrating by comparison. For who can fail to recollect that the utmost reach of eloquence has been attained by those who survive ? Who can doubt that Lord Plunket will, in after times, be classed with the very greatest orators ; and that his style, of the highest excellence, is also eminently original, entirely his own ? It affords the most perfect study to those whom its perfection may not make despair. In confining the mention of Mr. Canning to wit and humour, it must only be understood that we speak of the thing defective in Bolingbroke, not as confining Mr. C.'s excellence to that department ; he was a very considerable orator in other respects.

so incorrectly made between that which is becoming or honest in political life, and that which is virtuous or pure in private. It is seldom, indeed, that the lax morality can be tolerated, or even understood, which relieves the general reputation of a man from the censure naturally descending upon it, by citing personal merit as a kind of set-off to political delinquency ; seldom that there is any kind of sense in believing a man honest who has only betrayed his colleague, because he never cheated his friend ; or in acquitting of knavery the statesman who has sacrificed his principles for preferment, merely because he has never taken a bribe to break some private trust, embezzled a ward's money, sold a daughter or a wife. Nothing can be more shadowy than such distinctions, nothing more arbitrary than such lines of demarcation. To say that a dishonest, or sordid, or treacherous politician may be a virtuous man, because he has never exposed himself to prosecution for fraud, or forgery, or theft, is near akin to the fantastical morality which should acquit a common offender of horse-stealing because he had never been charged with burglary. It must, however, be confessed, that as there are some cases of political offences much worse than others, so in these the impossibility of making such distinctions becomes more apparent ; and both the kind and the amount of the crimes charged upon Bolingbroke seem to point

him out as an instance in which all contrast between public and private character signally fails. If, then, we advert to his conduct under these two heads, it is only in order to treat of different kinds of delinquency in separation and in succession.

He came into Parliament as a declared Tory ; the ancient families from which he sprung, the St. Johns and the Ports, had ever been of that faith. In the ministry which the Queen formed during the latter years of her reign from the members of that party, he held a conspicuous place ; having been Secretary of State and a leading supporter, first in the Commons, then in the Lords. He began under Harley, and to Harley he devoted himself ; to Harley he seemed firmly attached. Soon there broke out symptoms of jealousy : these occurred on the promotion of his chief to an earldom, while he only was made a viscount himself ; the want of a blue riband completed the philosopher's chagrin ; the incapacity, real or fancied, of his former patron, called down the moralist's vengeance instead of exciting his compassion or claiming his help ; and the latter part of his official life was passed in continually renewed and continually failing attempts to supplant and to ruin him. But we know the interior of the cabinet too little, are too superficially acquainted with personal details to be prepared for pronouncing a safe judgment upon the degree of blame which he thus earned : possibly

he only shared it with the other party ; not impossibly the whole might be Harley's. Upon the schemes in which he was engaged for restoring the Stuarts, undoing the work of the Revolution, exposing the civil and religious liberties of the country to the most imminent peril, and effecting this change through the horrors of civil war, possibly aggravated by foreign invasion, there can exist no doubt whatever. We shall first advert to the result of the evidence upon this head ; and then consider his case, as made by himself, to see how far he can be said to stand acquitted even upon his own showing.

That some at least of the Queen's Tory ministers, and even the Queen herself, were desirous of restoring the exiled family, and setting aside the Act of Settlement extorted from the same party by King William, there can be no doubt. Bolingbroke always professed himself the fast friend of the Revolution, and cited his having helped to introduce the Act of Settlement in proof of it. But the coldness and the sluggishness of that proceeding, on the part of himself and the King's Tory ministers, is well known ; nor does any one now doubt that they endeavoured to obstruct the bill in its progress, until the decease of the King should interrupt or supersede the measure. But Bolingbroke's denial of any design favourable to the Pretender, until after his attainder and during his

exile, was constant and peremptory. Nor did any probabilities the other way suffice to convince men how false his assertions were, until the publication of Marshal Berwick's 'Memoirs' at once disclosed the truth; and then we had a clear statement of his treason having commenced during the Queen's life-time—a statement under the hand of the very person through whom he has himself said that his communications to and from the Pretender uniformly passed, at the period when he confesses himself to have been engaged in the Stuart councils. There is an end, therefore, of his defence against the main body of the accusation, and it is ended by a witness to whose testimony he has precluded himself from objecting. But this is not all. His own conduct bears testimony against him as loudly as his own witness. Upon the Queen's demise, Harley, Ormond, and himself, being vehemently suspected of treasonable practices, were accused in Parliament constitutionally, legally, regularly, formally. What was the course pursued by the three? Harley, conscious of innocence, like a guiltless man remained, awaited his impeachment, faced his accusers, met his trial, and was unanimously acquitted. Nor does any one now believe, nor did any but they whom faction blinded then believe, that he had any share at all in the intrigue set on foot to restore the Stuarts. Ormond and Bolingbroke fled; they would not stand their trial.

Now the former never denied his accession to the treasonable plot—never having indeed professed any favourable disposition towards the Revolution Settlement; the latter, though he pretended to deny his guilt, yet gave none but the most frivolous reasons to explain his flight. He could only say that so odious to him had his former friend, his original patron, become, that he could not think of submitting to be coupled or mixed up with him in any matter or in any manner. So that his hatred of another prevailed over his love of himself—his inveterate dislike of his neighbour over the natural desire of self-defence; his repugnance for an enemy made him reject life itself when the terms on which it was offered involved the act of taking the same precaution with his rival to secure his safety; and, rather than defend his honour, clear his character from the worst of accusations, in the way common to all men, and which one whom he disliked had, like all innocent men, pursued, he preferred wholly abandoning the defence of his reputation, and passing with all the world for a false traitor. It is not often that a guilty person can make an honest-looking defence; not seldom that the excuses offered by suspected culprits work their conviction. But never yet did any one, when charged with a crime, draw the noose around his own neck more fatally than Bolingbroke did, when he resorted to so wretched an explanation of the act, which,

unexplained, was a confession—the flight from his accusers. If that act, standing alone, was fatal to the supposition of his innocence, the defence of it was, if possible, more effectual to his condemnation.

But his subsequent proceedings, and his own general defence of his whole conduct, are still more destructive of his fame. As soon as he fled, his attainder passed, and passed, be it observed, without a dissenting voice through both Houses—a circumstance demonstrative of the universal impression entertained of his guilt; and a thing which never could have happened to a man so lately minister, among his own supporters and his own party, upon any the lowest estimate of public virtue or political friendship, had a doubt existed regarding his conduct, or had he ventured even to deny the charges in private communications with his adherents. He arrived in France: without a day's delay he put himself in communication with the Pretender and his agents; and he at once accepted under him the office of his Secretary of State. Here then let us pause, and ask if this step was consistent with the charge against him being groundless. A statesman, professing inviolable attachment to the Revolution Settlement, is accused of treasonable correspondence with the exiled family; he flies, and because he has been, as he alleges, falsely accused of that offence, he immediately proceeds to commit it. Suppose he made

the only feasible excuse for running away from his accusers—that the public prejudices against him were so strong as to deprive him of all chance of a fair trial—did he not know that all such prepossessions are in their nature, in the nature of the people, in the nature of truth and justice, temporary, and pass away? Then would not innocence, if acting under the guidance of common sense and an ordinary knowledge of mankind, have waited, more or less patient, more or less tranquil, for the season of returning calm, when justice might be surely expected? But could anything be more inconsistent with all supposition of innocence than instantly to commit the offence in question, because there was a delay of justice, through the prevalence of popular prejudice? What would be said of any man's honesty who had fled from a charge of theft which he denied, and feared to meet, because supported by perjured witnesses, if he instantly took to the highway for his support? If, indeed, he says that the attainder gave him a right to take part against the government, then it must be observed that some months were allowed him by the act to return and take his trial, and that he never even waited to see whether, before the given time expired, men's minds should become so calm as to let him safely encounter the charge.

But another and a higher ground must be taken. Who can maintain that it is the part of an honest

man, to say nothing of a patriotic statesman, to leave the party of his country, and go over to her enemies, the instant he has been maltreated, however grievously, however inexcusably by her—that is, by a party of his enemies who happen to guide her councils? Is it the part of public virtue—but is it the part of common honesty—to side with the enemy and war with our own country because she or her rulers have oppressed us? Then, if all men are agreed that this affords no justification for such treason, how much worse is his crime who would plunge his country into civil war, to wreak his vengeance on the faction that has oppressed and banished him? The Revolution Settlement had obtained Bolingbroke's deliberate approbation: no man has spoken more strongly in its favour; it was the guarantee, according to him, of both civil and religious liberty. Yet against this settlement he declares war—to subvert it he exerts all his powers, merely because the Whig party had maltreated himself, and created against him a prejudice he was afraid to face. Nay more—be the settlement the very best conceivable scheme of government or not, it was established, and could only be upset by civil commotion, and probably required the aid of foreign invasion to overthrow it. To darken the face of his native land with those worst of all plagues was his desire, that he might take his revenge on his enemies, and trample upon them, raised to power

under the restored dynasty of the bigoted and tyrannical Stuarts ! This is not the charge made against Bolingbroke by his adversaries ; it is not the sentence pronounced upon him by an impartial public ; it is the case made for himself by himself, and it is as complete a confession of enormous guilt as ever man made. It further betokens a mind callous to all right feelings ; an understanding perverted by the sophistries of selfish ingenuity ; a heart in which the honest, with the amiable sentiments of our nature, have been extinguished by the habitual contemplations familiar to a low ambition.

From a man who could thus act in sharing the Pretender's fortunes, and could thus defend his conduct, little honesty could be expected to the party with which he had now ranged himself. The charge of having neglected the interests of the Pretender, and done less than he ought to further the rebellion in 1715, made against him by the thoughtless zeal, the gross ignorance, the foolish presumption of the Jacobites, and to which is almost entirely confined the defence of himself, in his celebrated, and for composition justly celebrated, ' Letter to Sir William Wyndham,' was plainly groundless. It was likely, indeed, to be groundless ; for the interests of Bolingbroke, all the speculations of his ambition, all the revengeful passions of his nature, were enlisted to make him zealous in good earnest for the success of the rebellion ; and to aid

that enterprise, however much he might despair of it, he exerted his utmost resources of intrigue, of solicitation, of argument. But as soon as it had failed, the Pretender probably yielded to the misrepresentations of Bolingbroke's enemies, possibly lent an ear to the vulgar herd of detractors, who could not believe a man was in earnest to serve the Prince because he refused, like them, to shut his eyes against the truth, and believe their affairs flourishing when they were all but desperate. The intrigues of Lord Mar worked upon a mind so prepared; and advantage being taken of a coarse though strong expression of disrespect towards the Prince, he was induced to dismiss by far his ablest supporter, and take that wily old Scotchman as his minister.

There was the usual amount of royal perfidy in the manner of his dismissal, and not much more. At night he squeezed his hand, and expressed his regard for the man whom in the morning he dismissed by a civil message requiring the seals of his office, and renewing his protestations of gratitude for his services, and confidence in his attachment. Bolingbroke appears to have felt this deeply. He instantly left the party, and for ever; but he affects to say that he had previously taken the determination of retiring from all connexion with the service as soon as the attempt of 1715 should be made and should fail. Assuming this to be true,

which it probably is not, he admits that his course was to depend, not on any merits of the Stuart cause, not on any view of British interests, not on any vain, childish, romantic notions of public duty and its dictates, but simply upon his own personal convenience, which was alone to be consulted, and which was to exact his retirement unless the dynasty were restored—which was, of course, to sanction his continuance in the service in the event of success crowning the Prince, and enabling Bolingbroke to be minister of England. But whatever might have been his intentions in the event of the Pretender retaining him as his Secretary of State, his dismissal produced an instantaneous effect. All regard for the cause which he had made his own was lost in the revenge for his deprivation of place under its chief; and he lost not a moment in reconciling himself with the party whom he had betrayed, and deserted, and opposed. To obtain an amnesty for the present, and the possibility of promotion hereafter, no professions of contrition were too humble, no promises of amendment too solemn, no display of zeal for the Government which he had done his utmost to destroy too extravagant. To a certain extent he was believed, because the Pretender's cause was now considered desperate, and Bolingbroke's interest coincided with the duty of performing his promise. To a certain extent, therefore, his suit was successful, and he was suffered to return home and resume his property with his rank; but

the doors of Parliament and office were kept closed against him, and the rest of his life was spent in unavailing regrets that he had ever left his country, and as unavailing rancour against the great and honest minister who had shown him mercy without being his dupe—who had allowed him to make England a dwelling-place once more, without letting him make it once more the sport of his unprincipled ambition.

Here, again, regarding his final abandonment of the Pretender, we have his own account, and on that alone we are condemning him. Because the Parliament of the Brunswicks attainted him when he confessed his guilt by his flight, he joined the standard of the Stuarts. It was covered with irremediable defeat, and he resolved to quit it. But meanwhile the master into whose service he came as a volunteer chose to take another minister: therefore Bolingbroke deserted him, and deserted him when his misfortunes were much more unquestionable than his ingratitude. The pivot of all his actions, by all that he urges in his own behalf, was his individual, private, personal, interest. To this consideration all sense of principle was sacrificed. all obligation of duty subjected; whatever his revenge prompted, whatever his ambition recommended, that he deemed himself justified in doing, if not called upon to do.

Bolingbroke's 'Idea of a Patriot King' certainly differed exceedingly from his idea of a Patriot Sub-

ject. The duty of the former, according to him, required a constant sacrifice of his own interests to the good of his country; the duty of the latter he considered to be a constant sacrifice of his country to himself. The one was bound on no account ever to regard either his feelings or his tastes, the interests of his family, or the powers of his station; the other was justified in regarding his own gratification, whether of caprice, or revenge, or ambition, as the only object of his life. Between the ruler and his subjects there was in this view no kind of reciprocity; for all the life of self-sacrifice spent by the one was to be repaid by a life of undisturbed and undisguised self-seeking in the other. But if the guarantee which his system proposed to afford for the performance of the patriot king's duties, or for making patriots of kings, was somewhat scanty and precarious, not to say fantastical, ample security was held out for the patriot citizen's part being well filled. The monarch was enticed to a right and moderate use of power by clothing him with prerogative, and trusting rather to that not being abused than to influence not being very extravagantly employed; the secret for moderating the love of dominion was to bestow it without any restraint; the protection given to the people against the prerogative of the prince was to deliver them over into his hands; the method proposed for putting the wolf out of conceit with blood was to throw

the lamb to him bound. If this did not seem a very hopeful mode of attaining the object, a very likely way to realise the 'Idea of a Patriot King,' the plan for producing Patriot Citizens in unlimited supply was abundantly certain. Whatever defects the one scheme might disclose in the knowledge of human nature, whatever ignorance of human frailty, none whatever could be charged upon the other; for it appealed to the whole selfish feelings of the soul, made each man the judge of what was most virtuous for him to do, and to guide his judgment furnished him with a pleasing canon enough—he had only to follow his own inclinations whithersoever they might lead. Such was the system of Bolingbroke upon the relative duties of sovereigns and subjects—a system somewhat more symmetrically unfolded as regards the former; but, touching the latter, fully exemplified by his practice, and also plainly sketched by his writings composed in his own defence; for it must never be forgotten that he is not like most men who have gone astray by refusing to practise what they preach, or proving unequal to square their own conduct by the rules which in general they confess to be just. His conduct has been openly and deliberately vindicated by himself upon the ground that all he did, at least all he admitted himself to have done, he was justified in doing; and he has confessed himself to have acted in every particular with an undeviating regard

to the pursuit of his own interests, and the gratification of his own passions.

Of Bolingbroke's private life and personal qualities, as apart from his public and political, little needs be added. He who bore the part in affairs which we have been contemplating could not easily have been a man of strict integrity, or of high principle in any relation of life. There may have been nothing mean or sordid in his nature ; an honesty, seldom tried in persons of his station, may have been proof against the common temptations to which it was exposed ; the honour which worldly men make their god may have found in him a submissive worshipper ; but the more exalted and the nobler qualities of the soul were not likely to be displayed by one whose selfish propensities were gratified in public life at the cost of all that statesmen most regard in public character ; and little reliance can be placed either on the humanity, or the self-control, or the self-respect of one whose passions are his masters, and hurry him on to gratification at all the hazards that virtue can encounter. Accordingly, his youth was a course of unrestrained and habitual indulgence. In a libertine age he was marked as among the most licentious. Even his professed panegyrist, Dean Swift, makes no defence for this part of his life, and only ventures to suggest that he had lived long enough to regret and repent of it. Sir William Windham,

too, fell into such courses, carried away by his example, and seduced by the charms of his society : and they who have written of him ascribe his early dissipation to the ascendant of such a Mentor. That he survived this tempest of the passions many years, and became more quiet in his demeanour during the calmness of his blood, is perhaps more the result of physical causes than any great eulogy of his returning virtue, or any manifestation of his penitence.

That his feelings, however, when left to their natural course, unperturbed by evil associates, nor hurried by evil propensities, were kind and generous, there is sufficient proof. The marriage which in early youth he first contracted was one of accident and of family arrangement : like all such unions, it was attended with little happiness. The second wife was one of his choice : to her his demeanour was blameless, and he enjoyed much comfort in her society. His attachment to his friends was warm and zealous ; and they cultivated and looked up to him with a fervour which can ill be expressed by such ordinary words as esteem, or respect, or even admiration. Yet even in this relation, the most attractive in which he appears to us, his proud temper got the better of his kinder nature ; and he persecuted the memory of Pope, whom living he had loved so well, with a rancour hardly to be palliated, certainly not to be vindi-

cated, by the paltry trick to which that great poet and little man had lent himself, in an underhand publication of the manuscripts confided to his care.

His spirit was high and manly ; his courage, personal and political, was without a stain. He had no sordid propensities ; his faults were not mean or paltry ; they were, both in his private life and his public, on a large scale, creating, for the most part, wonder or terror more than scorn or contempt—though his conduct towards the Pretender approached near an exception to this remark ; and the restless impatience with which he bore his long exclusion from the great stage of public affairs, and the relentless vengeance with which he, in consequence of this exclusion, pursued Walpole as its cause, betokened anything rather than greatness of soul.

That the genius which he displayed in the senate, his wisdom, his address, his resources in council, should, when joined to fascinating manners and literary accomplishments, have made him shine in society without a rival, can easily be comprehended. So great an orator, so noble a person in figure and in demeanour, one so little under the dominion of the principle which makes men harsh, and the restraints which tend to render their manners formal—was sure to captivate all superficial observers, and even to win the more precious applause of superior minds. To do that which he did

so well naturally pleased him ; to give delight was itself delightful ; and he indulged in the more harmless relaxations of society long after he had ceased to be a partaker in the less reputable pleasures of polished life. He probably left as high a reputation behind him, among the contemporaries of his maturer years, for his social qualities, which remained by him to the last, as he had gained with those who remembered the eloquence that in his earlier days shook the senate, or the policy and intrigues that had also shaken the monarchy itself. The dreadful malady under which he long lingered, and at length sunk—a cancer in the face—he bore with exemplary fortitude, a fortitude drawn from the natural resources of his vigorous mind, and unhappily not aided by the consolations of any religion ; for, having early cast off the belief in revelation, he had substituted in its stead a dark and gloomy naturalism, which even rejected those glimmerings of hope as to futurity not untasted by the wiser of the heathens.*

Such was Bolingbroke, and as such he must be regarded by impartial posterity, after the virulence of party has long subsided, and the view is no more intercepted either by the rancour of political enmity, or by the partiality of adherents, or by the

* Lord Chesterfield, in one of his letters lately published by Lord Mahon (ii. 450), says, that Bolingbroke only doubted, and by no means rejected, a future state.

fondness of friendship. Such, too, is Bolingbroke when the gloss of trivial accomplishments is worn off by time, and the lustre of genius itself has faded beside the simple and transcendent light of virtue. The contemplation is not without its uses. The glare of talents and success is apt to obscure defects which are incomparably more mischievous than any intellectual powers can be either useful or admirable. Nor can a lasting renown—a renown that alone deserves to be courted of a rational being—ever be built upon any foundations save those which are laid in an honest heart and a firm purpose, both conspiring to work out the good of mankind. That renown will be as imperishable as it is pure.

TRANSLATIONS.

Page 7.

'T is not *your* burning words that fright me! No!
The Gods affright me, and great Jove my foe!

Or thus—

I fear not you, fierce man, whose accents glow—
I fear the Gods, and Jupiter my foe.

Page 96.

For first of all there must be mature deliberation; and
when you have deliberated, there must be prompt execution.

Page 175.

Alas! how much less is it worth to live with others
than to remember thee!

THE END OF VOL. VI.



DA
506
A1
B73
1845
V.6

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST
STAMPED BELOW.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA

000 339 352 7

